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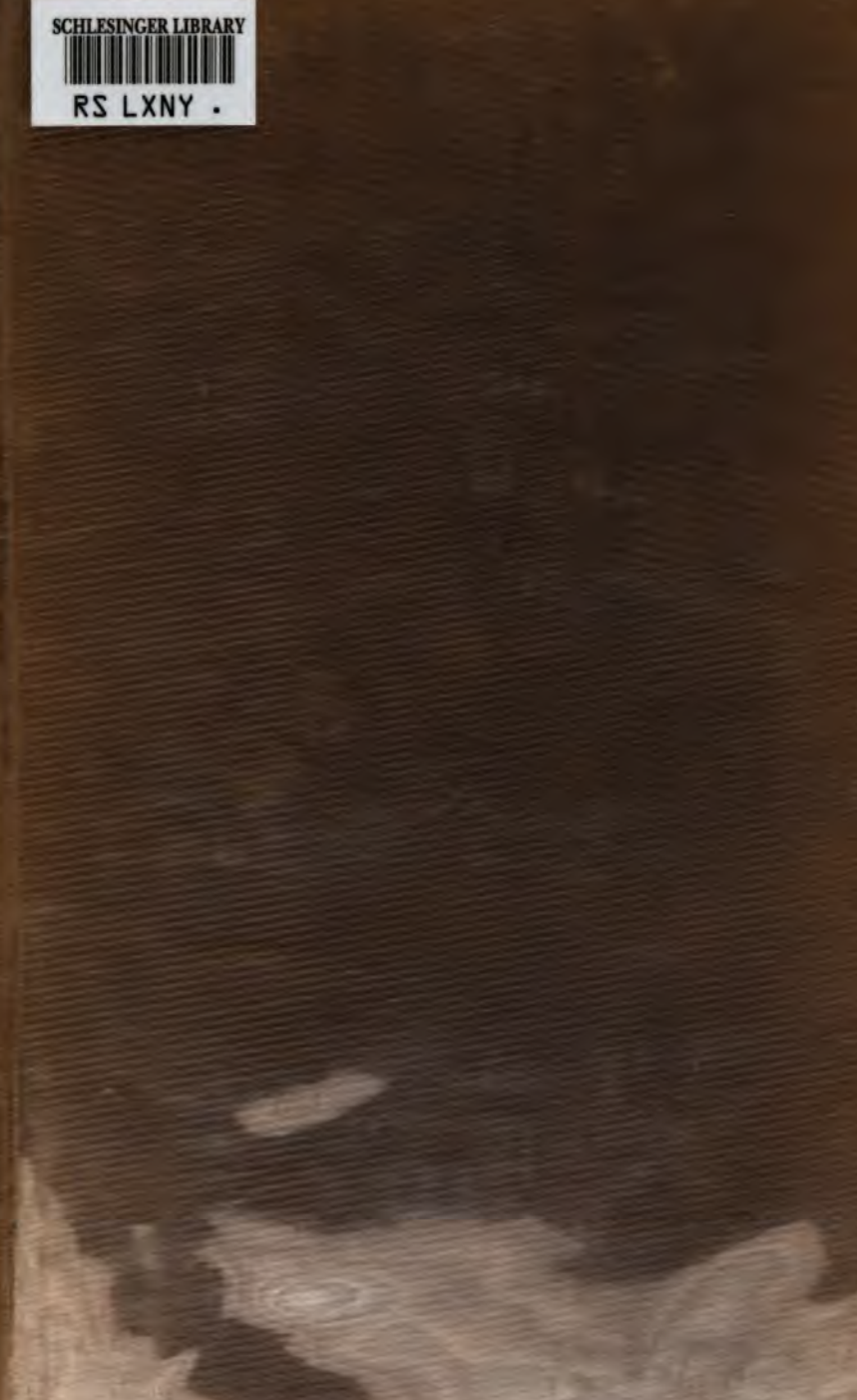

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Yours very sincerely
H More

From the Picture painted by Opie in 1786
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Pubd by Harper & Brothers. New York.

MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MRS. HANNAH MORE.

BY WILLIAM ROBERTS, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF "THE PORTRAITURE OF A CHRISTIAN GENTLEMAN."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

NEW-YORK:

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PREFACE.

VERY few words by way of preface can be necessary to a work that sufficiently explains itself, and requires no apology for its appearance. It may be satisfactory, however, to apprize the reader that, as Mrs. H. More could not but foresee that an account of her life, in this age of biography, must inevitably, with or without authority, come before the public after her death, it was natural for her to be desirous that the care of her memory should be committed to those whose intimate knowledge of her opinions, principles, and connections would secure her character from misrepresentation and mistake.

In a letter to Sir W. W. Pepys, after expressing herself concerning her two friends to whom this trust had been committed, and into whose hands her sister Mrs. Martha More had consigned her large collection of letters, in terms which it is not of importance to repeat in this place, Mrs. Hannah More makes the following communication: "I have made them my executrixes. My dear sister (unknown then to me) committed to them my posthumous reputation. I should be happy to think that nothing would be said of me when I was for ever out of hearing; but I believe it was the only way to stop less qualified persons. I will always remain entirely ignorant of all that has been done even by them." In page 382 of the second volume of this work may be seen Sir W. W. Pepys's answer to this communication.

It pleased the Great Ruler of events to take to himself one of the executrixes a few months before the death of Mrs. More, and the survivor thought proper to request the editor to undertake the task of recording to the world the particulars of a life to which the world had been so greatly indebted.

It may be as well to add, that so great has been the mass of letters and papers which, in consequence of the above-mentioned designation of this important trust, has come to the

hands of the editor, that no pains were necessary, had it been his object, to extend this work to an unreasonable or inconvenient length. His difficulty has consisted in reducing his materials within the present compass. And it may not be improper to take this opportunity of stating, for the sake of obviating any suspicion of mercenary motives in the publication of so voluminous a collection, that all the proceeds of the sale of the copyright, beyond the costs and charges incident to the preparation of the work for the press, are destined to charitable purposes, and will be so applied.

Having endeavoured, with as much assiduity as pressing occupations of a very different kind would allow, to do justice to the character and merit of the extraordinary person he had brought before the public, and having anxiously studied to avoid offending the feelings or delicacy of any person whose name occurs in the course of the ensuing correspondence, if the editor cannot say with Johnson that he dismisses the work "with frigid indifference," he can at least say with truth, that so long as neither the fame of Mrs. Hannah More, nor the cause with which it stands connected, has suffered detriment by passing through his hands, he dismisses the work without any unbecoming anxiety (unbecoming at his time of life) as to the result of his trial before the dispensers of critical justice.

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MEMOIRS.

PART I.

FROM THE YEAR A. D. 1745 TO A. D. 1779.

CHAPTER I.

THE period for discharging a duty to the public, in presenting to them the life of Hannah More, has arrived. Time, that has so long detained her here in sickness and infirmity, has at length dismissed her to her spiritual home in an eternal world. But it is the privilege, if such it may be called, of the distinguished upon earth to live in a sort of secondary existence with posterity; and to secure to that existence its rights, and diffuse its benefits, is the responsible task of the biographer. That task, with respect to the remarkable female above named, is assumed by one to whom a long friendship has afforded opportunities of observing and appreciating her qualities,—whose connection with those who have been her constant companions for many years has brought him beyond others acquainted with her familiar history; and into whose hands all that was collected concerning her by her nearest friend and earliest correspondent, her highly-qualified sister, during the most active years of her life, has been deposited for publication.

It is a matter of no light moment to bring the memory of Hannah More fairly before the world. Her history and her character, in great part, belong to and represent an age, the form and pressure of which has of late been rapidly disappearing, to give place to a new order of things, and a very different system of manners, whether better or worse may be variously affirmed; in some points probably better, in others not so good; but certainly very differently constituted, and disclosing very different tendencies.

In the twilight of the old, and in the dawn of the new era, Mrs. More accomplished her date here,—succeeded, it may be, by ladies more talking and talked about, but probably by none so capable of making the voice of instruction echo from the cottage to the saloon,—from the house of clay to the hall of

cedar. To imbody the likeness and perpetuate the remembrance of such a person is to preserve the best specimen of the past to be contrasted with the present generation, and in some sort to repress the rising fancies, fopperies, and excesses, which are apt to accompany the development of new opinions, and to propel the mind in a career of self-adulation to a dangerous distance from old paths, and the lights of experience. There was a happy balance in the qualities of this gifted lady, which kept her from all extremes. With a due estimate of the value of modern advancement, she retained the savour of our island character, as it was once distinguished by its probity and plainness among the communities of Christendom. What woman was, and what woman is, in her best estate, in the past and present periods of our domestic history, were displayed in her deportment; and what woman should be under all estates was illustrated in those principles which raised her character above the reach of shifting opinions, and made it a pattern for all times and all countries.

It seemed but justice to this excellent person to say something respecting her peculiar title to the veneration of her country, before we entered upon the narrative of her instructive and interesting life; reserving the more particular delineation of her character for the opportunity which will more seasonably present itself at the close of our record. The same justice also demands that the reader should be forewarned not to expect a hypothetical model of perfect excellence. No picture, or exemplar, is affected to be drawn; nothing but the sincere life of a daughter of Eve, beginning her course amid the vanities of the world, and advancing in excellence, under the impulse of extraordinary faculties, but more especially under the guidance of that grace without which all labour is strife, and all prudence folly.

Her life and social intercourse will be developed in the correspondence about to be presented; in which it will be seen how violent was the assault made upon her principles by flatteries and distinctions; and how the convictions which religion brings to the conscience struggled with the world, and brought her safe out of the conflict, into that humble path of moderation, circumspection, and trust, which made her example so profitable, and her teaching so efficacious.

A fitter example could not easily be proposed to her countrywomen than that of this virtuous lady, at a time when a new distribution and assortment of duties and occupations are threatening to disturb the balance of society, by confounding distinctions established by nature and necessity. It is, besides, of no small importance to divert the public mind from that infectious biography which has engrossed of late so much of its attention, blazoning, under colours the most false and alluring, the ministers and minstrels of sin and pollution. A woman is here presented to the recollection of her country, who once

sat under her own palm-tree, and sent forth her oracular truths, to which neither the murmurs of poverty nor the sound of the harp or viol, amid want or waste, in hamlets or in courts, could deny audience or admittance.

HANNAH MORE, the youngest but one of the five daughters of Jacob More, who was descended from a respectable family at Harleston, in Norfolk, was born in the year 1745, in the parish of Stapleton, in the county of Gloucester. Mr. Jacob More had received a learned education under the brother of the celebrated Dr. Samuel Clarke, at the grammar-school of Norwich, where he appears to have made a great proficiency in classical learning. He had been designed for the church; but his early expectations being defeated by the failure of a lawsuit in the family, he quitted that part of the country, and obtained, through the patronage of Lord Bottetourt, a foundation-school near Stapleton, a situation which, at that time, fulfilled the utmost of his wishes. Soon after he came into this part of the world, he married a young woman of plain education, the daughter of a creditable farmer, but endowed, like himself, with a vigorous intellect: and to the soundness of her judgment in the culture and regulation of her children, the credit and success which attended them has, in great part, been deservedly attributed.

This branch of the family was attached to the established church, Mr. More himself being a stanch tory, and what is understood by the designation of a high churchman; but the other members of the family were Presbyterians, and the daughters of Mr. Jacob More had frequently heard their father say that he had two great-uncles captains in Oliver Cromwell's army. Mr. Jacob More's mother appears, from family tradition, to have possessed a mind of more than ordinary vigour. She was a pious woman, and used to tell her younger relatives, that they would have known how to value gospel privileges had they lived, like her, in the days of proscription and persecution, when, at midnight, pious worshippers went with stealthy steps through the snow, to hear the words of inspiration delivered by a holy man at her father's house; while her father, with a drawn sword, guarded the entrance from violent or profane intrusion; adding, that they boarded the minister, and kept his horse, for ten pounds per annum. By an anecdote related of this lady, it should seem that she possessed considerable fortitude. Being subject to sudden seizures, for which bleeding was necessary, to avoid the necessity of sending three miles across the country for medical assistance, she learned to perform the operation on herself. The mother's only sister, after whom Mrs. Hannah More was named, was a woman of considerable capacity, greatly improved; and her memory was so esteemed, that an embroidered silk apron of her workmanship is still preserved as a relic by a distant branch of

the family. The following communication, received by the executrix some little time after Mrs. More's death, from one of her relations, furnishes a few interesting particulars of the family:—

Diss, Oct. 14, 1833.

DEAR MADAM,

I am anxious to give you all the information I can respecting my mother's family. I can assure you it is correct, and will correspond with any family letters or documents that may be found; as my revered parent had an excellent memory, and a strong affection for her grandmother, which made us value the only memorial we had, namely, the apron which she worked at a boarding-school in Norwich.

The family of the Mores was highly respectable, but they were of different parties. Mrs. H. More's grandfather married into a family who were zealous nonconformists. They boarded a minister in their house, and assembled there at the hour of midnight, to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, while Mr. More guarded the entrance with his sword. In after-times, my mother has heard the old lady reproach her granddaughter as lightly esteeming the Word of God, when they complained of fatigue after walking some distance in the midst of winter to their place of worship. She was a stanch Presbyterian, remarkable for the simplicity and integrity of her principles. She always rose at four, even in the winter, after she had reached her eightieth year; and she lived beyond her ninetieth. Her son, Mrs. H. More's father, and her daughter, afterward Mrs. Hayle of Needham, each received an education adapted to their prospects, which were considered as promising all that is desirable in this life; but the unfortunate issue of a lawsuit blasted their well-founded hopes, and sent Mr. More from his native county to the west of England. We, who are spared to see the result of this trying dispensation of Providence, must pause to meditate awhile on his infinite wisdom and mercy, more particularly when we look at the descendant of the more fortunate cousin, who enjoyed his unjustly-gotten wealth but a short time. Death entered his dwelling, and his eldest son soon dissipated all the property, as he lived in the lowest state of profligacy. The estates were worth more than eight thousand per annum at the close of the lawsuit. There was also a substantial family-mansion, with a library, family portraits, &c. It is situated near the coast at Wenhaston, in Suffolk, not far distant from Aldborough. I went a journey thither, to examine if there were any monuments that would supply me with data. I found only one; it was erected to the memory of the fortunate Mr. More; not being acquainted with the Christian names, I am at a loss how to distinguish them. There were two Mr. Mores—Mrs. H. More's great-uncles, who served in Cromwell's army. I have seen the

name in "Lord Clarendon's History of the Rebellion." There were also a Mrs. and Miss More, who died at Yoxford: the latter of a cancer, at the age of fifty. They, with the rest of the family, were on terms of intimacy with Sir John Blois, Lord Rous, the grandfather of the Earl of Stradbrook, the Goldings of Thorington, Reginald Rabbet, Esq. of Bramfield, Dr. Carter of Beccles, and all the families of consideration in the vicinity. Believe me to be,

Your faithful humble servant,
ELIZABETH NEWSON.

These little circumstances are of no other value than as they serve to expose the error of the general opinion respecting the quality and condition of this family, whose origin, if not noble, appears at least to have been liberal and respectable.

From information that cannot be questioned, we learn, that at a very early age she was distinguished by great quickness of apprehension, retentiveness of memory, and a thirst after knowledge; and as it may be interesting to the curiosity of the reader to trace the dawnings of so bright a genius, I shall not apologize for inserting a few little anecdotes of her early childhood. Between the age of three and four, her mother, thinking it time to teach her to read, found, to her astonishment, that by an eager attention to the instructions bestowed upon her sisters, she had already made considerable progress; and before she had attained her fourth year, she repeated her catechism in the church, in a manner which excited the admiration of the minister of the parish, who had so recently received her at the font. Her nurse, a pious old woman, had lived in the family of Dryden, whose son she had attended in his last illness, and the inquisitive mind of the little Hannah was continually prompting her to ask for stories about the poet Dryden. At this early period, too, the signs of that precarious health which exercised her piety and virtue by so many trials in the course of her long life, began to appear; and it was recorded in the family, that pain and suffering were in her at that early period without their usual attendants of fretfulness and impatience.

At eight years old her thirst for learning became very conspicuous: but her father, in addition to his other disappointments, having, at his removal from his native place, lost the principal part of his books, which he had sent by a separate conveyance, his collection became circumscribed to the very small number which travelled with him, and which consisted of a few Latin, Greek, mathematical, and geographical authors: but this deficiency was in some measure supplied by his very wonderful memory, which enabled him to satisfy the eager desire of his daughter to learn the histories of the Greeks and Romans, by relating to her, while sitting on his knee, all the striking events which they contained, and reciting to her the speeches of his favourite heroes, first in their original language,

to gratify her ear with the sound, and afterward translating them into English; particularly dwelling on the parallels and wise sayings of Plutarch; and these recollections made her often afterward remark, that the conversation of an enlightened parent, or preceptor, constituted one of the best parts of education.

It is related, that Mr. More, who was remarked for his strong dislike of female pedantry, having nevertheless begun to instruct his daughter in the rudiments of the Latin language and mathematics, was soon frightened at his own success.

The study of the mathematics was not pursued: but she ever carefully cultivated her acquaintance with the Latin classics; and of the mathematics she has often said, that the little taste of them she had thus acquired was of sensible advantage to her through the whole course of her intellectual progress. The mother, who had received but a moderate education, but is said to have been furnished by nature with some of her best gifts, was as anxious for the instruction of their promising daughter, as the father was fearful of its consequences; and his consent to her entering upon any new studies was only wrung from him by their joint importunity.

The eldest of the five daughters was sent to a French school at Bristol, as it was the wish of the parents that their children should be qualified to procure for themselves a respectable independence by the establishment of a boarding-school; and this meritorious purpose was seconded by the industry and solid abilities of this daughter, who, upon her return from school, at the end of each week, constantly imparted to her sisters the lessons she had received, and under this tuition Hannah began an acquaintance with the French language, which was afterward matured, by study and opportunity, into a perfect acquaintance with its idiom and pronunciation. Some French officers, of cultivated minds and polished manners, who, being on their parole in the neighbourhood, were frequent guests at Mr. More's table, always fixed upon Hannah as their interpreter; and her intercourse with this society is said to have laid the ground of that free and elegant use of the language for which she was afterward distinguished.

In her days of infancy, when she could possess herself of a scrap of paper, her delight was to scribble upon it some essay or poem, with some well-directed moral, which was afterward secreted in a dark corner where the servant kept her brushes and dusters. Her little sister, with whom she slept, was usually the repository of her nightly effusions; who, in her zeal lest these compositions should be lost, would sometimes steal down to procure a light, and commit them to the first scrap of paper which she could find. Among the characteristic sports of Hannah's childhood, which their mother was fond of recording, we are told, that she was wont to make a carriage of a chair, and then to call her sisters to ride with her to Lon-

don to see bishops and booksellers; an intercourse which we shall hereafter show to have been realized. The greatest wish her imagination could frame, when her scraps of paper were exhausted, was, that she might one day be rich enough to have a whole quire to herself; and when, by her mother's indulgence, the prize was obtained, it was soon filled with supposititious letters to depraved characters, to reclaim them from their errors, and letters in return expressive of contrition and resolutions of amendment.

At length the sisters were thought sufficiently qualified for their long-projected undertaking of opening a boarding-school at Bristol; which, from its commencement, was attended with uncommon success; and the eldest Miss More, not yet quite twenty-one, took under her care Hannah, then scarcely twelve years old, to give her the benefit of masters in the modern languages. And here it may not be amiss to mention, that the high character for pure morals, discreet conduct, and solid information, which the eldest sister had already acquired, made her the early object of that respect which followed her to the tranquil and Christian close of her useful life. She was indebted for this best inheritance to her worthy parents, who had ever anxiously endeavoured to infuse into their children's minds the same exalted sense of morality, built upon religious principles, which adorned their own; and the sisters never ceased to remember the pious care which their father had taken to impress upon their minds the sanctity of the Lord's day.

Among the books that were now brought within her reach the Spectator was the first to engross her attention; which, if not of profundity enough to ground a correct taste, was at least of sufficient grace to direct it in a due course of exercise and cultivation.

She had reached her sixteenth year, when the elder Sheridan came to Bristol, to give lectures on eloquence; and such was the impression made upon her young imagination, by an exhibition so novel and intellectual, that her feelings could find utterance only in a copy of verses, which was presented to the lecturer by a friend of both the parties. The performance was probably beyond the promise of an age so tender, as it induced Mr. Sheridan to seek an acquaintance with the author, which when obtained, increased his admiration of her dawning genius. About the same period, a dangerous illness brought her under the care of Dr. Woodward, a physician of eminence at that day, and distinguished by his correct taste. On one of his visits, being led into conversation with his patient on subjects of literature, he forgot the purpose of his visit in the fascination of her talk; till suddenly recollecting himself, when he was half-way down stairs, he cried out, "Bless me! I forgot to ask the girl how she was;" and returned to the room, exclaiming, "How are you to-day, my poor child?"

About this time she formed an acquaintance with Ferguson, the popular astronomer, then engaged at Bristol in giving public lectures; an acquaintance which soon ripened into friendship: and the time they passed together being devoted to topics connected with science, she derived from it a decided advantage; and he, on his part, was impressed with so much respect for her taste and genius, that he is said to have submitted the style of most of his compositions to her inspection. With such testimonies she was early ushered into literary life; and her increasing acquaintance with books and men kept her on an equality with the expectation which such testimonies had begun to excite. But, among her early acquaintance, to none does she appear to have been more indebted for her advancement in critical knowledge, and the principles of correct taste, than to a linen-draper of Bristol, of the name of Peach, of whose extraordinary sagacity and cultivated intellect she was often heard to express herself with great admiration. He had been the friend of Hume, who had shown his confidence in his judgment by intrusting to him the correction of his history, in which, he used to say, he had discovered more than two hundred Scotticisms. But for this man, it appears, two years of the life of the historian might have passed into oblivion, which were spent in a merchant's counting-house in Bristol, whence he was dismissed on account of the promptitude of his pen in the correction of the letters intrusted to him to copy. More than twenty years after the death of Mr. Peach, the subject of these memoirs, being in company with Dr. Percy, then Bishop of Dromore, Mr. Gibbon, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and others, who were conjecturing what might have been the cause of this chasm of two years in the life of Hume (of which the bishop was then proposing to give a sketch), she was enabled to clear up the mystery, by relating the above anecdote. As the intended life did not appear, she never knew what use the bishop made of her communication.

At this time there existed few or none of those pure and judicious selections from our best authors which are now in the hands of all young persons under education; and it was observed by the youthful moralist, that for want of such an advantage, a custom was prevailing among her juvenile acquaintance of committing to memory parts of plays, not always sound in principle or pure in tendency. In the hope of giving to these habits a safer direction, she wrote, in her seventeenth year (1762), the pastoral drama of the "Search after Happiness." And the attempt succeeded as it deserved.

She appears at this period of her life, as at all others, to have suffered much from a morbid sensibility of constitution, which exposed her to severe suspensions of her mental activity. During one of those intervals of necessary repose, she formed an acquaintance at Weston-super-Mare, to which place she had resorted for the recovery of her health, with Dr. Langhorne;

with whom a very lively intellectual intercourse was sustained, until a habit of intemperance, in which he had vainly sought relief, under the pressure of domestic calamity, raised a barrier between him and persons of strict behaviour. Some of the letters of this spendthrift of the patrimony of genius, to Miss More, are entertaining, and exhibit a good specimen of his vigorous and vivacious pen. Alas! that nature should have so often to deplore the neglect or abuse of her best gifts. But it is Satan's proudest exploit to make the powers of man turn against himself; and that which should be for his peace, to become an occasion of falling. Whether the propensity to which we have alluded intercepted the career of this highly qualified man, I know not; but he died in the flower of his prime, when the promises of his youth were on the verge of their full accomplishment. That such a man should take pains to put out the lamp that lights up the chambers of speculation and thought within him, is as lamentable as it is censurable; and little more can be said for him, but that his guilt and folly appear harmless, in comparison with the malignity of those of our day who abuse the arts of composition and the power of song, to spread a moral night around them, and to set on the passions to do their savage work, while the soul slumbers in a dreaming security, under the dire influence of their delusive opiates.

Blagdon House, Oct. 22d, 1773.

DEAR MADAM,

My evil genius told me you were no more. I sat one fine day at Lincombe-spring, and thought of you with great sensibility. Poor Hannah More, said I, bade me plant weeping-willows along the side of the rivulet. She shall be obeyed; and they shall shed natural tears over departed genius,—over buried friendship.

Genius, and wit, and beauty wait,
The mansions of the silent urn;
One tender tear shall sooth her fate,
One tender line for Hannah mourn.

Our best thanks for your Indian sweetmeats. But alas! we have nothing to return except the *frutti campestri.*

Believe me, dear madam, I look forward to the Christmas vacation with abundance of pleasure. Then, I tell my hopes, we shall once more live melodious days.

Bustle is delighted with his nutcrackers, and says he now loves Hannah More a great deal, and Miss Neale only a little. A genuine Roger of the Vale!

Mrs. L. desires me to say every thing that is friendly and affectionate for her. Pray tell the sisterhood that I am their most faithful humble servant; and then tell yourself *tutti che enti Amicizia di core,* for I am most truly,

Most sincerely yours,

J. LANGHORNE.

Blagdon House, 12*th Feb.* 1775.

MY DEAR MADAM,

People who have a knack at writing have many advantages over those poor folks who know little about the matter; and this I had the sagacity to discover before I had got quite to the end of your letter. When I found that you had slipped away to London, without any more regard to your promise than a prime minister, I opened your letter in no good temper, you may suppose. But I had not read far before I began to soften, by-and-by to be appeased, then satisfied, and afterward in perfect good-humour; and all this for no reason in the world, that I could discover, but because some folks have a knack in writing, and, like Milton's very polite and sensible devil, can make "the worse appear the better reason."

The *lacheté* of being thus overcome, however, is perfectly ridiculous; and, now that I have recovered my senses a little, I can see your fault in spite of your address; or, to speak like my old acquaintance Dr. I——, "I can perceive the turpitude of your guilt through the magnetism of your eloquence."

In plain English, you were very lazy and very naughty, in not stepping over to Blagdon, as you promised. You know my carriage was at your summons. But you do not care a farthing for us, and you are disappointed if you thereby think to make us unhappy; for there is no reason why we should despise ourselves, though you despise us.

I never had a doubt concerning the spuriousness of the Poems of Ossian. It was impossible the originals should exist. What chiefly gives them an antique air is their penury of ideas; a circumstance that does more honour to the inventor's judgment than to his imagination. After all, I have a regard for Macpherson, who has certainly some talents, and is a well-behaved man.

Should you be in town when the poor "Justice"* is delivered from the burden of the press, you will perhaps let me know how the air agrees with him. Whatever that town may say, of this be assured, that he deserves no favour at its hands.

You are a classic—*Vive, memor mei!*

J. LANGHORNE.

P.S.—You are so obliging as to ask me for commands; supposing that if a poet and a philosopher have business in town, it must, doubtless, be in your own literary way. Pray be so good as go to the warehouse in George's Yard, Oxford-street, over-against Dean-street, Soho, and buy me a bushel of Surinam potatoes for planting; which, with the paper of instructions you will receive along with them, please to send by the Bristol wagon, to the Queen's Head, Redcliffe-street.

Commands from my lady wife, who is neither poet nor phi-

* A poem he was about to publish.

losopher, for you or for your good sister, viz. a crimson hat and cloak trimmed with blond lace. You are moreover desired to order the necessary materials, without leaving a plenipotentiary commission with the milliner. Neither is it to be violently modish. So saith my lady wife to you and sister, and that she is your very affectionate humble servant.

Blagdon House, June 24th, 1775.

That your *fame* had reached the ends of the earth everybody knew; but that *you* were gone thither was such news to me that I shall not forget it—till I see you here again. What you tell me, over and above, is still more extraordinary—that you eat and drink beneath the sky! and that the sun, at this time of the year, is somewhat of the warmest. Why, I'd lay my whole Greek estate to one of Mr. Newberry's little books, that fifty millions of people, not one of whom was called Hannah More, have done and discovered the same. There is for you now; and for your attempting, with your allegories and your metaphors, and such jack-o'-lantern things, to puzzle a poor country parson, and a fellow that hath no wit.

By-the-by, though I envy Bristol the quiet possession of you most mortally, I do not like to hear of you in this same Cornwall, crawling about the ankles and heels of the island, insomuch, that if it do but shake a leg, down you go into the sea without recovery.

Yet did I think, for at least two hours, of leaving my *Arx secura*, and visiting your bower; nay, I was full three-quarters more resolved, and were I now to ask myself what prevented me, I should get no answer. I designed to have passed through Exeter, Tavistock, Lostwithiel, Truro, and Penryn—was I right? However, I beg my most respectful compliments to the family where you are, and let them know that, if I come into those parts, I shall ask permission to read the inscription on the bower. It is elegantly plain, such as all things of that kind—I had almost said every thing in the world—ought to be. I would, by my good-will, have my muse like my mistress,

> Her voice the music of her heart,
> Unforced, and innocent of art;
> Her face a flower of vernal morn,
> That opens, and a smile is born.

I would willingly have it so, I say; but we all run after out-of-the-way things. How enchantingly beautiful was Gray's Muse, when she wandered through the churchyard in her morning-dress! But when she was arrayed in gorgeous attire, in a monstrous hoop and a brocade petticoat, I could gaze upon her indeed; she made an impression on my eye, but not on my heart. Can you tell me who wrote a little poem called *The Halcyon?* I met with it lately in a foolish collection, and

was mightily pleased with its elegant simplicity and easy flow. I have read something that Mason has done in finishing a half-written ode of Gray. I find he will never get the better of that glare of colouring, "that dazzling blaze of song" (an expression of his own, and ridiculous enough), which disfigures half his writings.—Adieu.

J. LANGHORNE.

Blagdon House, Feb. 11, 1776.

MY DEAR MADAM,

There is as much difference between reputation and fame as there is between time and eternity, and I, as a spiritual person, should attend to the interests of the latter; I am, therefore, much less concerned about your reputation than your fame. You shall not appear in the St. James's, nor in any other saint's chronicle, nor anywhere else, except in the saint's calendar—whoever does these things, the author is suspected, and *the wife of Cæsar*, you know the rest. I hear you have had the honour to be abused by Kenrick; I think nothing would hurt me so much as such a fellow's praise—I should feel as if I had a blister upon me.

You will stand first in the Review for February, I am told; the Storm was in the way in January, and the article arrived too late; *there*, too, I find, you will be trimmed. It is no matter—you deserve all this for running away from your *tried* friends in the country. If you will come down to us, we will remove the emporium of letters from London to Bristol; we'll set up a press, and write books; I have got a *thing* and a *half* ready for it. *Les voici.*

APOSTROPHE TO MERCY.

(FROM THE "COUNTRY JUSTICE," PART III.)

O Mercy, thron'd on His eternal breast
Who breath'd the savage waters into rest;
By each soft pleasure that thy bosom smote,
When first Creation started from His thought
By each warm tear that melted o'er thine eye,
When on His works was written, "These must die!"
If secret slaughter yet, nor cruel war,
Have from these mortal regions forc'd thee far,
Still, to our follies, to our frailties blind,
O, stretch thy healing wings o'er human kind!

Blagdon House, Dec. 19, 1776.

I do not intend in this letter to write about anybody or any thing but myself; it is probable, therefore, that the apologies you very likely expect, you will find in my history. I am at present of no small importance in my own estimation, being just risen from the dead, a citizen of no mean city! The truth is, that for two months past I have been incapable of enjoying, and almost of attending to any one earthly thing;

totally depressed, sunk down, and buried beneath a complication of rheumatic, scorbutic, nervous, and bilious complaints. These rebellious powers, like the Americans on their continent, carried every thing before them in a very *unconstitutional* manner indeed. At last matters came to a crisis. General Bile was appointed commander-in-chief, and led the whole forces of Rheumatism Bay, Scurvy Island, and Nervous Province, into the very centre and heart of my dominions, and drew up his army in form of battle. I drew up my whole force against him in the following order:—

First battalion, a body of Emetic Tartars, under the command of General Ipecacuanha. These fought with uncommon bravery for one whole day and a night, made prodigious havoc of the Biliary forces, and took their general prisoner. A truce was proclaimed for twenty-four hours; when it appearing that a large body of the Biliaries had secreted themselves in the lower parts of the country, I despatched the

Second battalion, consisting of foreign troops, chiefly of the provinces of Senna, Tamarind, and Crim Tartary, under the command of Sub-brigadier-general Cathartic.

These brave soldiers behaved with great courage and gallantry; defeated the Biliaries in fifteen pitched battles, and at last totally drove them out of the country. The above two battles lasted five days and five nights. The engagement was at first so hot that victory was doubtful. It was indeed a dreadful and a bloody combat, and I certainly can never forget it.

On the sixth day a few of the Nervous regiments were seen straggling, but being pursued by Colonel Cordial with the Jalap light-horse, they threw down their arms. The troops of Scurvy Island concealed themselves in the woods, and other inaccessible places.

Thus, my dear madam, have I given you a circumstantial account of a most desperate and dangerous contest I maintained for my all. What were the battles of Bunker's Hill and Long Island compared to this? In my estimation, certainly nothing.

I am now *wondrous* well, and whether you may or may not flatter me that I shall continue so, I will at all events lay before you an idea of the constant regimen of my life.

At eight, I rise, and that is almost as soon as the sun at this season makes himself known to us here. On my table I find a cup of cold chamomile tea with an infusion of orange peel; —dress, and come down stairs at nine, when I meet my breakfast, consisting of a basin of lean broth with a dry brown loaf, manufactured from corn of my own growing. Breakfast table cleared, I call for pen, ink, and paper, and recollect—not which of my correspondents I have been longest indebted to, but which the humour leads most to write to. After this is per-

formed, I apply a little to the laws of my country, to make myself a more useful citizen and a better magistrate.

About twelve, if the day turns out fine, I order my horses, for exercise on Mendip, which at this time of the year I can seldom effect; I am consequently obliged to seek exercise in measuring the length of my own hall. At two, I dine, always upon one dish, and, by way of dessert, eat three or four golden pippins, the produce of my own orchard, and drink as many glasses of wine. But then the afternoon,—the solitary afternoon—Oh! for that the trash of the month comes in, and whether it makes me laugh or sleep, 'tis equally useful. The evening is divided between better books; music, and mending the fire, a roasted potato, a pint basin of punch, and to bed.

You have here the whole etiquette of my retirement, which in the summer is diversified by rural occupations and more agreeable amusements. In winter I am a better scholar, but in summer I am a better citizen. In the former season I attend only (as I do in this letter) to myself; in the latter I cultivate the ground, raise crops of corn and hay, and flocks of sheep, and am useful to society.

I assure you that in my next letter I intend to think and speak of *you*. Thank you for your pretty Cottonian verses, and your easy and elegant epitaph, which, I think, is without a fault.

Your most truly affectionate,

LANGHORNE.

Dr. Langhorne's correspondence may be fitly closed with a little copy of verses sent by him to Hannah More.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN THE AUTHOR'S GARDEN, ON THE PROMISE OF A VISIT FROM A LADY.

I.

Blow, blow, my sweetest rose!
For Hannah More will soon be here,
And all that crowns the ripening year
Should triumph where she goes.

II.

My sun-flower fair, abroad
For her thy golden breast unfold,
And with thy noble smile behold
The daughter of thy god.

III.

Ye laurels, brighter bloom
For she your wreaths, to glory due,
Has bound upon the hero's brow*
And planted round his tomb.

* The Inflexible Captive.

IV.

Ye bays, your odours shed!
For you her youthful temples bound,
What time she trod oft fairy ground,
By sweet Euterpe led!

V.

Come, innocent and gay,
Ye rural nymphs your love confess,
For her who sought your happiness,*
And crown'd it with her lay.

At the age of twenty, having access to the best libraries in her neighbourhood, she cultivated with assiduity the Italian, Latin, and Spanish languages, exercising her genius and polishing her style in translations and imitations, especially of the odes of Horace, and of some of the dramatic compositions of Metastasio, which were shown only to her more intimate literary friends, of whom some have left their testimonies to their spirit and elegance. She was not, however, in sufficient good-humour with these, or any of her very early compositions, to allow them to live. The only one which was rescued was Metastasio's opera of Regulus, which, after it had lain by for some years, she was induced to work up into a drama, and publish with the title of "The Inflexible Captive."

It is related of her, in proof of the ease with which she transfused the spirit of the Italian authors into her own language, that being present at a celebrated Italian concert, to gratify one of the company, who was desirous of knowing the subject of some parts of the performance, she took out her pencil, and gave a translation of them, which was snatched from her, and inserted in the principal magazine of the day. She ranked among her literary friends at this time, Dean Tucker, Dr. Ford, and Dr. Stonehouse, persons, to mix with whom upon equal terms was proof sufficient (for she was then only between twenty and thirty) of her early maturity of understanding.

Dr. (afterward Sir James) Stonehouse was then a name of high reputation. He had been many years a physician in great practice at Northampton, which profession he was induced to relinquish for one to which the bent of his mind had strongly disposed and prepared him. Having recovered his health by the use of the Bristol waters, he took holy orders, and fixed his residence in Bristol, in the same street in which Hannah More then lived with her sister. A friendship soon commenced between them, which suffered no interruption till the death of Sir James Stonehouse. Miss H. More had written but little when this acquaintance commenced, but Dr. Stonehouse discerned the promise of greater things, and was unbounded in his admiration of the freshness and originality of her powers in conversation, in which her modesty and judgment contended with

* Search after Happiness.

her fancy and fertility. Miss H. More wrote the epitaphs of both Sir James Stonehouse and his lady, in the chapel at the Hot-wells.

It would be injurious to the merits of Dr. Stonehouse to forget to say of him that he was a useful guide to H. More in her study of divinity, and her choice of theological writers.

At about the age of twenty-two, she received the addresses of a gentleman of fortune, more than twenty years older than herself. He was a man of strict honour and integrity, had received a liberal education, and, among other recommendations of an intellectual character, had cultivated a taste for poetry, and had shown much skill in the embellishments of rural scenery, and the general improvement of his estate. But for the estate of matrimony he appears to have wanted that essential qualification, a cheerful and composed temper. The prospect of marriage, with the appendage of an indifferent temper, was gloomy enough, but there were other objections, on which it is unimportant to dwell. It will be enough to produce an extract from a letter received by the executrix of Mrs. More soon after her decease, written by a lady whose early and long intimacy with Mrs. More, and personal knowledge of this delicate transaction, coupled with the great respectability of her character, entitle her testimony to the fullest credit.*

Keynsham, near Bristol, Feb. 10, 1834.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I knew the late Mrs. Hannah More for nearly sixty-four years, I may say most intimately; for during my ten years' residence with her sisters, I was received and treated, not as a scholar, but as a child of their own, in a confidential and affectionate manner; and ever since the commencement of our acquaintance, the same friendly intercourse has been kept up by letters and visiting. I was living at her sister's when Mr. Turner paid his addresses to her; for it was owing to my cousin Turner (whom my father had placed at their school) that she became acquainted with Mr. Turner. He always had his cousins, the two Misses Turner, to spend their holydays with him, as a most respectable worthy lady managed and kept his house for him. His residence at Belmont was beautifully situated, and he had carriages and horses, and every thing to make a visit to Belmont agreeable. He permitted his cousins to ask any young persons at the school to spend their vacations with them. Their governesses being nearly of their own age, they made choice of the two youngest of the sisters, —Hannah and Patty More. The consequence was natural. She was very clever and fascinating, and he was generous and sensible; he became attached, and made his offer, which was accepted. He was a man of large fortune, and she was young

* The widow of the late Captain Simmons.

and dependent; she quitted her interest in the concern of the school, and was at great expense in preparing and fitting herself out to be the wife of a man of large fortune. The day was fixed more than once for the marriage; and Mr. Turner each time postponed it. Her sisters and friends interfered, and would not permit her to be so treated and trifled with. He continued in the wish to marry her; but her friends, after his former conduct, and on other accounts, persevered in keeping up her determination not to renew the engagement.

I am, dear madam, &c.

In this difficulty (we borrow still from the same authentic source), Sir James Stonehouse was applied to for his timely interposition, and his assistance was promptly afforded. In the counsel of such a friend she found resolution to terminate this anxious and painful treaty. The final separation was amicably agreed upon, and the contracting parties broke off their intercourse by mutual consent. At their last conversation together Mr. T. proposed to settle an annuity upon her; a proposal which was with dignity and firmness rejected, and the intercourse appeared to be absolutely at an end. Let it be recorded, however, in justice to the memory of this gentleman, that his mind was ill at ease till an interview was obtained with Dr. Stonehouse, to whom he declared his intention to secure to Miss More, with whom he had considered his union as certain, an annual sum, which might enable her to devote herself to her literary pursuits, and compensate, in some degree, for the robbery he had committed upon her time. Dr. Stonehouse consulted with the friends of the parties, and the consultation terminated in a common opinion that, all things considered, a part of the sum proposed might be accepted without the sacrifice of delicacy or propriety, and the settlement was made without the knowledge of the lady, Dr. Stonehouse consenting to become the agent and trustee. It was not, however, till some time after the affair had been thus concluded, that the consent of Miss More could be obtained by the importunity of her friends.

The regard and respect of Mr. T. for Miss More was continued through his life; her virtues and excellences were his favourite theme among his intimate friends, and at his death he bequeathed her a thousand pounds.

I have entered into this transaction at a time when the grave has heaped its mound upon it, and no bosom any longer beats that can be affected by the narrative. No apprehension therefore of giving pain has imposed silence upon me; and as I know not whose malevolence may induce them to misinterpret the actions of this excellent person (and Hannah More has not so sojourned here as not to have provoked "the strife of tongues"), it has been of importance to rescue this great and generous name from the imputation of inconstancy, or a calculating

prudence in an affair in which truth and honour claim to be the rightful arbiters.

Her correct and tender mind, which did not come out from these embarrassments without a certain degree of distress and disturbance, seemed to seek relief in the resolution which she formed and kept, of avoiding a similar entanglement. Nor did her resolution want its trial and its testimony. Not long afterward her hand was again solicited and refused; and, as it happened in the former case, the attachment of the proposer was succeeded by a cordial respect, which was met on her part by a corresponding sentiment, and which ended only with his existence. These incidents the reader of delicacy will duly appreciate. There is upon the face of them a stamp of that high-mindedness and moral strength by which the dignity of her character was illustrated in the various walk of her Christian life—public and private.

Those who knew her best felt the difficulty most of deciding to which belonged the greater homage—the firm or the amiable qualities of her mind. At the early age at which we are now retracing her course, we see in her correspondence and intercourse a spirit and a principle which, if we do not admire and love, it is because the fascinations of imposing and unfeminine examples have, in these days of deceptious lights and dangerous novelties, imparted a wrong bias to the judgment, and inverted the natural dispositions of order and propriety.

CHAPTER II.

We have now attended Miss More to the threshold of active life and general society, to the portal of that tumultuous mart where the busy clamour of interest, emulation, and vanity assail the ear and bewilder the senses—to that stage in the progress of ardent inexperience where the blooming speculations of hope and fancy are to be exchanged for vulgar verities.

Hannah More now presents herself to us as a member of those assemblies where wit and fashion were to put her principles upon the defensive, and prove and decide her character. Her raptures on her first introduction to a "live author" she has been heard very humorously to describe, and her sisters long remembered the strong desire she expressed to have a view from some hiding-place of Dr. Johnson, or some of the literary oracles of the day. Garrick's career was supposed to be drawing to a close, which inflamed her eager desire to hear Shakspeare speaking by the organ of that consummate actor —a wish that might be pardoned in one to whom the Muse had already made a tender of her patronage, and vouchsafed her

inspiration; and for whose brow she was preparing an unfading chaplet.

What her opinions were at a subsequent period, of the lawfulness of frequenting theatrical exhibitions, became apparent in her conduct and correspondence, but at the time we are regarding her, neither the manners and habits of persons denominated religious, nor the scruples of her own mind, had interdicted her visits to the theatre.

But there are some rare minds, in which sobriety and enthusiasm settle well together, and combine their forces; and of this temperament was Hannah More's. Impelled by the consciousness of superior powers, she probably felt a natural desire to enter upon the field of intellectual enterprise. Society, in its most engaging form, was extending its arms to receive her, and it was not in woman to resist the invitation; but her correspondence and confidential communications soon made it apparent how solid an estimate she put upon its fascinations. She possessed that "hidden strength," which in "the various bustle of resort" kept her from vanity and vacillation. Her admiration of genius belonged to the structure and constitution of her mind, on which the fairest forms of truth and sentiment were beautifully inscribed. If to know the great and to hear the wise was the ambition of her early days, let it be remembered that, in the maturity of her age, to gain the good was her single concern; and that having to decide between pleasure and virtue, she made her choice with a promptitude so resolute, that, if I must not find in Hercules a likeness for a lady, I may well compare her with the heroine of Comus. She came forth to meet the world with a talisman in her bosom: "something holy lodging there," that broke and defeated its spells and its forgeries.

Some of her earliest letters, after her introduction into general society, were written to Mrs. Gwatkin (but it is to be regretted they are without date), then living near Bristol, one of her first and firmest friends; and it will probably amuse the reader to be brought acquainted with their contents.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Gwatkin.

Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, London.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Here have I been a whole week, to my shame be it spoken, without ever having given you the least intimation of my existence, or change of situation; but I doubt not of your having been informed of it by my friend Charlotte. You, who know the hurry, bustle, dissipation, and nonsensical flutter of a town life, will, I am sure, excuse me if I have not devoted a few minutes to you before, when I assure you it has not been in my power. Martha and the fair Clarissa are of the party, and we are comfortably situated in Henrietta-street.

We have been to see the new comedy of young Sheridan,

"The Rivals." It was very unfavourably received the first night, and he had the prudence to prevent a total defeat, by withdrawing it, and making great and various improvements; the event has been successful, for it is now *better* though not *very* much liked. For my own part, I think he ought to be treated with great indulgence: much is to be forgiven in an author of three-and-twenty, whose genius is likely to be his principal inheritance. I love him for the sake of his amiable and ingenious mother. On the whole I was tolerably entertained. Saturday we were at the "Maid of the Oaks," at Drury. The scenery is beautiful—the masquerade scene as good as at the Pantheon. The piece is only intended as a vehicle to the scenery, yet there is some wit and spirit in it, being written by General Burgoyne, and embellished, &c. by Garrick. He is not well enough to play or see company—how mortifying! He has been at Hampton for a week. If he does not get well enough to act soon, I shall break my heart. Monday we dined, drank tea, and supped at the amiable Sir Joshua Reynolds's; there was a brilliant circle of both sexes; not in general literary, though partly so. We were not suffered to come away till one.

I have not been able to pay my devoirs to my dear Dr. Johnson yet, though Miss Reynolds has offered to accompany me whenever I am at leisure. I wish I could convey his "Journey to the Hebrides" to you; Cadell tells me he sold 4000 of them the first week. It is an agreeable work, though the subject is sterility itself: he knows how to avail himself of the commonest circumstances, and trifles are no longer trifles when they have passed through his hands. He makes the most entertaining and useful reflections on every occurrence, and when occurrences fail, he has a never-failing fund in his own accomplished and prolific mind. Pray let me hear from you soon. I wish you were with us.

I am so hurried that I don't know what I write. Adieu, my dear friend, Yours at all times,

HANNAH MORE.

From the same to the same.

That *Idler*, that *Rambler*, Dr. Johnson, was out of town, so we were deprived of the felicity of seeing him last night; but it is a pleasure the obliging Miss Reynolds has promised me. Though this bright *sun* did not cheer us with his rays, yet we had a constellation of the agreeables. I enclose the verses I mentioned. The thought happened to strike in preference to the others. We cannot have the pleasure of seeing Charles-street to-night—Have been to hear Lindsey—Hope you did not expire at the opera for fear, as Lady Grace says, you should not live to go to another.

Adieu—much yours,

H. MORE.

From the same to the same.

Hampton Court.

MY DEAR MADAM,

At length I have the pleasure of being well enough to be suffered to gratify my inclination to pay a visit to this most charming and delightful place. I have been here these three days, but till this morning could not venture to visit the palace; which to a weak person is a very great undertaking, and I cannot but felicitate myself upon having accomplished it without the least fatigue. I think, madam, I have heard you say you have never seen this palace; but I hope, if you come to town in the spring (as you sometimes promise) your curiosity will excite you to it. It is the second sight (the museum was the first) that ever with me more than satisfied a raised expectation. This immense edifice is rather like a town than a palace, and I would not pretend to venture out of the apartment we were in without a clew of thread in my hand to bring me back by. The private apartments are almost all full; they are all occupied by people of fashion, mostly of quality; and it is astonishing to me that people of large fortune will solicit for them. Mr. Lowndes has apartments next to these, notwithstanding he has an estate of 4000*l.* a-year. In the opposite ones lives Lady Augusta Fitzroy. You know she is the mother of the Duke of Grafton.

I must now say a word of the place I am in. My extreme ignorance does not permit me to judge of this magnificent building according to the rules of architecture or taste. Yet that cannot destroy the pleasure I receive in viewing it. I need not tell you, my dear madam, that it was built by the ambitious Wolsey, not for a regal palace, but for his own use; and is a striking monument of his presumption, luxury, and amazing riches. The grand state-apartments are all that they show; and these are six-and-twenty in number, and, for magnificence of every kind, are indeed admirable. I except the furniture, which the iron tooth of time has almost totally destroyed. This brings to my mind the fable of Æsop, where the old woman, smelling to the lees of the brandy-cask, cries out, Ah! dear soul! if you are so good now that it is almost over with you, what must you have been when you were in perfection! It is a false report that this court was stripped of the fine paintings to adorn Buckingham House, as there were none removed but seven of the cartoons; six of these glorious pieces having been burnt. What shall I say of these paintings? I was never more at a loss. A *connoisseur* would be confounded at their number and beauty; what then can I do, who scarcely know blue from green, or red from yellow. I will only say that they are astonishingly beautiful; they are the originals of the greatest masters of the Italian schools, and consequently of

the whole world. The stair-case is superb, light, and modern, richly ornamented with the *finest* paintings I should have continued to think, if I had not seen *finer* afterward. The Muses and Apollo, gods, devils, and harpies (I forget by what hand), ten thousand pieces, I believe, in different rooms, by Vandyke, Lely, Rubens, Guido, Baptiste, Rousseau, Kneller, and every other name that does honour to this divine science. In the grand council-chamber nothing can surpass the ceiling—yet something can too; King William's writing-closet is prettier. It is Endymion and the moon; so sweet the attitude—so soft the colouring—such inimitable graces!

I do not know a more respectable sight than a room containing fourteen admirals, all by Sir Godfrey. Below-stairs is what they call the beauty-room; this is entirely filled with the beauties of King William's time, his queen at the head, who makes a very considerable figure among them, and must have been very handsome: but no encomiums can do justice to the labours of this industrious princess; her tapestry and other works being some of the finest ornaments here. The other tapestry is immensely rich, the ground gold: but what surpass every thing of this kind are two rooms hung, the one with historical pieces of the battles and victories of Alexander, the other of Julius Cæsar. The celebrated Cynic and his no less celebrated tub, is worthy of the highest admiration. The contempt and scorn that animate his countenance, in addressing himself to the victorious Macedonian, delighted me extremely. You have the character of Clytus in the lines of his face. These famous pieces of tapestry were done at Brussels, from the paintings of Le Brun, at Versailles. Another room, and what is esteemed one of the finest, is hung round with the defeat of the Spanish armada, with an inimitable piece of Lord Effingham Howard, then lord-high-admiral. It would be endless to aim at recounting the numberless curiosities with which the palace abounds: but I must not omit mentioning an ordinary room full of the original furniture of the cardinal. It is curious only for its antiquity, consisting only of cane tables, chairs, &c. I have not yet seen the play-house, chapel, and gardens. Every day this week is destined to pleasure, of which I shall plague you with an account in the next sheet. This day, had we been in town, we should have had tickets for the birthnight: but you will believe I did not much regret that loss, when I tell you I have visited the mansion of the tuneful Alexander. I have rambled through the immortal shades of Twickenham; I have trodden the haunts of the swan of Thames. You know, my dear madam, what an enthusiastic ardour I have ever had to see this almost sacred spot, and how many times have I created to myself an imaginary Thames: but, enthusiasm apart, there is very little merit either in the grotto, house, or gardens, but that they once belonged to one of the greatest poets on earth. The house must have been originally very

small, but Sir William Stanhope, who has bought it, has added two considerable wings; so that it is now a very good house. The furniture is only genteel; all light linen, not a picture to be seen; and I was sorry to see a library contemptibly small, with only French and English authors, in the house where Pope had lived. The grotto is very large, very little ornamented, with but little spar or glittering stones. You know, madam, the garden is washed by the Thames, without any enclosure, which is beautiful. This noble current was frozen quite over. The reason, I suppose, why we saw no naiads. Every Hamadryad was also congealed in its parent tree. I could not be honest for the life of me: from the grotto I stole two bits of stones, from the garden a sprig of laurel, and from one of the bed-chambers a pen; because the house had been Pope's, and because Sir William, whose pen it was, was brother to Lord Chesterfield. As our obliging friend will not let us pass over any thing that is worth seeing, we went to Lord Radnor's, now Mrs. Henley's. This is within a hundred yards of Mr. Pope's; consequently the situation, the water, and the gardens are much the same. This is fitted up in a whimsical taste; there is a pretty picture-gallery, the pieces mostly Dutch; the apartments are small, and rather oddly than magnificently furnished. I believe there is no such thing as a large room in this part of the world, except in this palace: a room the size of one of your parlours would be accounted a wonder. You will easily believe, madam, that I could not leave Twickenham without paying a visit to the hallowed tomb of my beloved bard. For this purpose I went to the church, and easily found out the monument of one who would not be buried in Westminster Abbey. The inscription I am afraid is a little ostentatious: yet I admire it as I do the epitaph, which I will not transcribe, as I am sure it is as fresh in your memory as in mine. I imagine the same motive induced him to be interred here which made Cæsar say "he had rather be the first man in a village than the second at Rome." Pope, I suppose, had rather be the first ghost at Twickenham than an inferior one at Westminster Abbey. I need not describe the monument to you, as you have seen it, as well as his father's.

This day I have been to see

"Esther's groves and Claremont's terraced heights."

as the sweet poet of the Seasons calls them. I need not tell you, madam, that this famous Claremont is the seat of the Duke of Newcastle: but, alas! this is an unpropitious season for parks, gardens, and wildernesses. You have undoubtedly seen Claremont; so I shall not describe it. It commands thirty miles' prospect, St. Paul's among the rest. The park is vast, and I like it better than Bushy Park, of which Lord Halifax is ranger. It is almost close to Hampton Park, not quite twenty

miles from London. On our return we went to see Mr. Garrick's: his house is repairing, and is not worth seeing; but the situation of his garden pleases me infinitely. It is on the banks of the Thames; the temple about thirty or forty yards from it. Here is the famous chair, curiously wrought out of a cherry-tree which really grew in the garden of Shakspeare at Stratford. I sat in it, but caught no ray of inspiration. But what drew, and deserved, my attention was a most noble statue of this most original man, in an attitude strikingly pensive—his limbs strongly muscular, his countenance expressive of some vast conception, and his whole form seeming the bigger from some immense idea with which you suppose his great imagination pregnant. The statue cost five hundred pounds.

Adieu, my dear madam, with grateful respects,

H. More.

Hannah More visited London in 1773 or 4, in company with two of her sisters; and her introduction to Mr. and Mrs. Garrick took place in about a week after her arrival. Garrick had seen a letter from Miss More to a person known to them both, so well describing the effect produced upon her mind by his performance of the character of Lear, as to inflame his curiosity to see and converse with her. The interview was easily procured; and after an hour passed together, they parted reciprocally pleased, having discovered in each other what was gratifying to both—natural manners, original powers, and wit, in union with good-nature. On the day following, Miss More and Mrs. Montagu were brought together at Mr. Garrick's house; and her introduction to the great and the greatly endowed was sudden and general. It came upon her with a surprise which might have excused some whisperings of self-adulation, and some disturbance of principle; but it seemed rather to provoke what may be called a reaction of just sentiment, and to speed her progress in that right direction in which reason and religion had decided her course.

It was afterward Mr. Garrick's delight to introduce his new friend to the best and most gifted of his own acquaintance.

The desire she had long felt to see Dr. Johnson was speedily gratified. Her first introduction to him took place at the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who prepared her, as he handed her up stairs, for the possibility of his being in one of his moods of sadness and silence.

She was surprised at his coming to meet her as she entered the room, with good-humour in his countenance, and a macaw of Sir Joshua's in his hand; and still more, at his accosting her with a verse from a Morning Hymn which she had written at the desire of Sir James Stonehouse. In the same pleasant humour he continued the whole of the evening. Some extracts from the letters of one of her sprightly sisters, to the family at home, will afford the best picture of the intercourse

and scenes in which Hannah was now beginning to bear a part.

London, 1774.

Since I wrote last, Hannah has been introduced by Miss Reynolds to Baretti, to Edmund Burke—the sublime and beautiful Edmund Burke! From a large party of literary persons assembled at Sir Joshua's she received the most encouraging compliments; and the spirit with which she returned them was acknowledged by all present, as Miss Reynolds informed poor us. Miss R. repeats her little poem by heart, with which, also, the great Johnson is much pleased.*

London, 1774.

We have paid another visit to Miss Reynolds. She had sent to engage Dr. Percy (Percy's collection,—now you know him), quite a sprightly modern, instead of a rusty antique, as I expected. He was no sooner gone, than the most amiable and obliging of women (Miss Reynolds) ordered the coach, to take us to Dr. Johnson's *very own house*; yes, Abyssinia's Johnson! Dictionary Johnson! Rambler's, Idler's, and Irene's Johnson! Can you picture to yourselves the palpitation of our hearts as we approached his mansion? The conversation turned upon a new work of his, just going to the press (the Tour to the Hebrides), and his old friend Richardson. Mrs. Williams, the blind poet, who lives with him, was introduced to us. She is engaging in her manners; her conversation lively and entertaining. Miss Reynolds told the doctor of all our rapturous exclamations on the road. He shook his scientific head at Hannah, and said, "She was a *silly thing*." When our visit was ended, he called for his hat (as it rained), to attend us down a very long entry to our coach, and not Rasselas could have acquitted himself more *en cavalier*. We are engaged with him at Sir Joshua's, Wednesday evening. What do you think of us?

I forgot to mention, that not finding Johnson in his little parlour when we came in, Hannah seated herself in his great chair, hoping to catch a little ray of his genius; when he heard it, he laughed heartily, and told her it was a chair on which he never sat. He said it reminded him of Boswell and himself, when they stopped a night at the spot (as they imagined) where the Weird Sisters appeared to Macbeth: the idea so worked

* If there be any persons remaining who were in habits of social intercourse with the family of Mrs. H. More, they will readily bear testimony to the originality of humour and playfulness of imagination which enlivened the conversation and letters of this lady, Miss Sally More, who possessed also talents of another kind; some of the most valuable of the cheap repository tracts being the productions of her pen. She was senior to Mrs. H. M. by a very few years. The reader will doubtless peruse, with all due indulgence, the joyful effusions of an ardent and intelligent girl, who found herself suddenly introduced to the choicest society of the metropolis.

upon their enthusiasm that it quite deprived them of rest: however they learned, the next morning, to their mortification, that they had been deceived, and were quite in another part of the country.

Johnson afterward mentioned to Miss Reynolds how much he had been touched with the enthusiasm which was visible in the whole manner of the young authoress, and which was evidently genuine and unaffected. Such was the first introduction of Hannah More into the world of literature; an introduction which had far exceeded her modest expectations, and more than gratified the thirst she had so early felt for intellectual society. She returned with her sisters to Bristol, after a six weeks' residence in town, which she again visited in the February of the following year, 1775.

We shall now best make out the details of some years of her life by extracts from her letters, written chiefly to her sisters in the country, with the carelessness and freedom of one who wrote only for the bosom and the fireside, and not for the world. Indeed, she never attempted what is called *good* letters herself, or much valued them in others. She used to say, "If I want wisdom, sentiment, or information, I can find them much better in books. What I want in a letter is the picture of my friend's mind, and the common sense of his life. I want to know what he is saying and doing; I want him to turn out the inside of his heart to me, without disguise, without appearing better than he is; without writing for a character. I have the same feeling in writing to him. My letter is, therefore, worth nothing to an indifferent person, but it is of value to the friend who cares for me." She added, that letters among near relations were family newspapers, meant to convey paragraphs of intelligence, and advertisements of projects, and not sentimental essays.

Miss H. More to one of her sisters.

London, 1775.

Our first visit was to Sir Joshua's, where we were received with all the friendship imaginable. I am going, to-day, to a great dinner; nothing can be conceived so absurd, extravagant, and fantastical as the present mode of dressing the head. Simplicity and modesty are things so much exploded, that the very names are no longer remembered. I have just escaped from one of the most fashionable disfigurers; and though I charged him to dress me with the greatest simplicity, and to have only a very distant eye upon the fashion, just enough to avoid the pride of singularity, without running into ridiculous excess; yet, in spite of all these sage didactics, I absolutely blush at myself, and turn to the glass with as much caution as a vain beauty just risen from the small-pox; which cannot be

a more disfiguring disease than the present mode of dressing. Of the one, the calamity may be greater in its consequences, but of the other it is more corrupt in its cause. We have been reading a treatise on the morality of Shakspeare; it is a happy and easy way of filling a book, that the present race of authors have arrived at—that of criticising the works of some eminent poet; with monstrous extracts, and short remarks. It is a species of cookery I begin to grow tired of; they cut up their authors into chops, and by adding a little crumbled bread of their own, and tossing it up a little, they present it as a fresh dish: you are to dine upon the poet;—the critic supplies the garnish; yet has the credit, as well as profit, of the whole entertainment.

From the same to the same.

London, 1775.

I had yesterday the pleasure of dining in Hill-street, Berkeley-square, *at a certain Mrs. Montagu's, a name not totally obscure.* The party consisted of herself, Mrs. Carter, Dr. Johnson, Solander, and Matty, Mrs. Boscawen, Miss Reynolds, and Sir Joshua (the idol of every company), some other persons of high rank and less wit, and your humble servant,—a party that would not have disgraced the table of Lelius or of Atticus. I felt myself a worm, the more a worm for the consequence which was given me by mixing me with such a society; but, as I told Mrs. Boscawen, and with great truth, I had an opportunity of making an experiment of my heart, by which I learned that I was not envious, for I certainly did not repine at being the meanest person in company.

Mrs. Montagu received me with the most encouraging kindness; she is not only the finest genius, but the finest lady I ever saw: she lives in the highest style of magnificence; her apartments and table are in the most splendid taste; but what baubles are these when speaking of a Montagu! her form (for she has no *body*) is delicate even to fragility; her countenance the most animated in the world; the sprightly vivacity of fifteen, with the judgment and experience of a Nestor. But I fear she is hastening to decay very fast; her spirits are so active, that they must soon wear out the little frail receptacle that holds them. Mrs. Carter has in her person a great deal of what the gentlemen mean when they say such a one is a "poetical lady;" however, independently of her great talents and learning, I like her much; she has affability, kindness, and goodness; and I honour her heart even more than her talents; but I do not like one of them better than Mrs. Boscawen; she is at once polite, learned, judicious, and humble, and Mrs. Palk tells me, her letters are not thought inferior to Mrs. Montagu's. She regretted (so did I) that so many suns could not possibly shine at one time; but we are to have a smaller party, where,

from fewer luminaries, there may emanate a clearer, steadier, and more beneficial light. Dr. Johnson asked me how I liked the new tragedy of Braganza. I was afraid to speak before them all, as I knew a diversity of opinion prevailed among the company: however, as I thought it a less evil to dissent from the opinion of a fellow-creature than to tell a falsity, I ventured to give my sentiments; and was satisfied with Johnson's answering, "You are right, madam."

From Miss Sarah More to one of her sisters.

London, 1775.

Tuesday evening we drank tea at Sir Joshua's, with Dr. Johnson. Hannah is certainly a great favourite. She was placed next him, and they had the entire conversation to themselves. They were both in remarkably high spirits; it was certainly her lucky night! I never heard her say so many good things. The old genius was extremely jocular, and the young one very pleasant. You would have imagined we had been at some comedy had you heard our peals of laughter. They, indeed, tried which could "pepper the highest," and it is not clear to me that the lexicographer was really the highest seasoner. Yesterday Mr. Garrick called upon us; a volume of Pope lay upon the table; we asked him to read; and he went through the latter part of the "Essay on Man." He was exceedingly good-humoured, and expressed himself quite delighted with our eager desire for information; and when he had satisfied one interrogatory, "Now, madam, what next?" He read several lines we had been disputing about, with regard to emphasis, in many different ways, before he decided which was right. He sat with us from half-past twelve till three, reading and criticising. We have just had a call from Mr. Burke.

We will now present an extract from another of our author's letters to one of her sisters.

London, 1775.

"Bear me, some god, O quickly bear me hence,
To wholesome solitude, the nurse of ——"

"Sense," I was going to add in the words of Pope, till I recollected that *pence* had a more appropriate meaning, and was as good a rhyme. This apostrophe broke from me on coming from the opera, the first I ever *did*, the last, I trust, I ever *shall* go to. For what purpose has the Lord of the universe made his creature man with a comprehensive mind? why make him a little lower than the angels? why give him the faculty of thinking, the powers of wit and memory; and to crown all, an immortal and never-dying spirit? Why all this

wondrous waste, this prodigality of bounty, if the mere animal senses of sight and hearing (by which he is not distinguished from the brutes that perish) would have answered the end as well; and yet I find the same people are seen at the opera every night—an amusement written in a language the greater part of them do not understand, and performed by such a set of beings!

But the man

"Who bade the reign commence
Of rescued nature and reviving sense,"

sat at my elbow, and reconciled me to my situation, not by his approbation, but his presence. Going to the opera, like getting drunk, is a sin that carries its own punishment with it, and that a very severe one. Thank my dear Doctor S. for his kind and seasonable admonitions on my last Sunday's engagement at Mrs. Montagu's. Conscience had done its office before; nay, was busy at the time: and if it did not dash the cup of pleasure to the ground, infused at least a tincture of wormwood into it. I *did* think of the alarming call, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" and I thought of it to-night at the opera.

From the same to the same.

Sunday night, 9 *o'clock*.

Perhaps you will say I ought to have thought of it again to-day, when I tell you I have dined abroad; but it is a day I reflect on without those uneasy sensations one has when one is conscious it has been spent in trifling company. I have been at Mrs. Boscawen's. Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Chapone, and myself only were admitted. We spent the time, not as wits, but as reasonable creatures; better characters, I trow. The conversation was sprightly, but serious. I have not enjoyed an afternoon so much since I have been in town. There was much sterling sense, and they are all ladies of high character for piety; of which, however, I do not think their visiting on Sundays any proof: for though their conversation is edifying, the example is bad. You do not, I presume, expect I should send you a transcript of the conversation: I have told you the interlocutors, but you are not to expect the dialogue. Patty says, if she had such rich subjects she could make a better hand of them: I believe her; my outlines are perhaps more just, but she beats me all to nothing in the colouring. She is but a young painter, and is fond of drapery and ornament: for my own part, the more I see of the "honoured, famed, and great," the more I see of the littleness, the unsatisfactoriness of all created good; and that no earthly pleasure can fill up the wants of the immortal principle within. One need go no farther than the company I have just left, to be convinced that "pain is for man," and that fortune, talents,

and science are no exemption from the universal lot. Mrs. Montagu, eminently distinguished for wit and virtue, "the wisest where all are wise," is hastening to insensible decay by a slow but sure hectic. Mrs. Chapone has experienced the severest reverses of fortune; and Mrs. Boscawen's life has been a continued series of afflictions that may almost bear a parallel with those of the righteous man of Uz. Tell me, then, what is it to be wise? This, you will say, is exhibiting the unfavourable side of the picture of humanity, but it is the right side, the side that shows the likeness.

London, 1775.

I have read Sir Joshua's last discourse at the Academy; in my poor judgment it is a master-piece for matter as well as style, and that we have scarcely a finer writer. I have told the Reynoldses how angry I am with Burke for an unhandsome paragraph on the Dean of Gloucester (Dean Tucker). They are warm friends, but I would not give up my point. They seem to think that the man and the politician are different things: but I do not see why a person should not be bound to speak truth in the House of Commons as much as in his own house.*

At the end of another six weeks, Hannah More again returned to her family, and paid her next visit to London in the January of 1776.

During her residence at home, she one day laughingly said to her sisters, "I have been so fed with praise and flattering attentions, that I think I will venture to try what is my real value, by writing a slight poem, and offering it to Cadell myself." In a fortnight after this idea was started, she had completed the legendary tale of "Sir Eldred of the Bower;" to which she added the little poem of the "Bleeding Rock," which she had written some years previously. Upon her presenting it to Mr. Cadell, he offered her a price which exceeded her idea of its worth; very handsomely adding, that if she could hereafter discover what Goldsmith obtained for the "Deserted Village," he would make up the sum, be it what it might. This treaty was the beginning of a connexion with Mr. Cadell, which was carried on through an intercourse of nearly forty years, with a reciprocity of esteem and regard which suffered no interruption.†

A letter from Mrs. Montagu, succeeded by one from Mr.

* Mrs. H. More has frequently mentioned, as a curious coincidence, that Edmund Burke, Dean Tucker, and Mrs. Macauley called upon her in Park-street, Bristol, on the same morning, fortunately in succession, as they were all at that time writing against each other.

† It may be worth mentioning, as rather a curious coincidence, that Mr. Cadell was a native of the same village as herself, though they were entirely strangers to each other till this negotiation introduced them to an acquaintance.

Richard Burke, brother of him who has made that name so illustrious, will testify to the esteem in which those early essays of her muse were held.

Hill-street, Dec. 26, 1775.

DEAR MADAM,

If the report of my being in France had delayed my having the pleasure of reading your late publication,* it had done me unintended injury: but I had received great delight from the work the very morning it first appeared; and the kind attention you have shown to me, by your letter to Mrs. Boscawen and Mr. Cadell, flatters me in the most agreeable manner.

While you are doing so much honour to your sex in general by your works, and so much in particular to me, by judging me worthy to possess them, you must excuse me for intruding upon you with my remarks. I admire the felicity of your muse, in being able to do equal justice to the calm magnanimity of the Romans, and the spirit and fire of the gothic character. If I were writing to any one but yourself, I should indulge in making a thousand remarks on the beautiful simplicity of your tale; the propriety of the manners, so suited to the ancient times; the sentiments so natural to the different characters; the just distinction between the unchecked transport of inexperienced youth, and the guarded rapture of a breast

"Which many a grief had known."

Let me beg you, my dear madam, to allow your muse still to adorn British names and British places. Wherever you lead the fairy dance, flowers will spring up. Your Rock† will stand unimpaired by ages, as eminent as any in the Grecian Parnassus. But I forget that I am trespassing on your time, even while I am reflecting how advantageously to others, and honourably to yourself, it may be employed. Excuse this intrusion; believe me with highest regard, dear madam,

Your most obedient humble servant,

ELIZABETH MONTAGU.

Dr. Johnson is to dine with me on Thursday. We shall have the pleasure of talking of you.

From Mr. Richard Burke to Miss H. More.

Cecil-street, January 19, 1776.

MADAM,

I should have ill deserved the very flattering honour you have been pleased to do me, had I willingly delayed my acknowledgments so long after you had conferred it. I came to

* Sir Eldred of the Bower.

† The little poem called "The Bleeding Rock."

town the night before last, and then only received your most acceptable present. I immediately read that copy in which my pride was so much interested. That passion, justifiable only by the cause, gave all the charms of novelty to those beauties which had lost nothing of their effect and power by intimate acquaintance. My brother's bookseller by his direction sent him your truly elegant and tender performance. The poems made a great, and certainly the best part of our entertainment in the country; and it was before my judgment was biassed by the flattering attention you were so condescending as to show me, that the "decies repetita" was applied to your work with great sincerity.

I beg your acceptance of my very hearty thanks for the pleasure and honour you have been pleased to do me, of which I am not totally unworthy, because I have a just, and therefore a very high, sense of the value of the present, and of the uncommon merit of the giver.

Be so good as to present my most respectful compliments to your sisters, and to believe me,

Your most obedient and
Most obliged humble servant,
RICHARD BURKE.

From Miss Sarah More to Miss Martha More.

London, 1776.

From Miss Reynolds we learned that Sir Eldred is the theme of conversation in all polite circles, and that the beauteous Bertha has kindled a flame in the cold bosom of Johnson, who declares that her parent has but one fault; which is, suffering herself to graze on the barren rocks of Bristol, while the rich pastures of London are guarded by no fence which could exclude her from them. He praised the elegant turn of the dedication, and said the compliment was without precedent. We have had a very fine dinner and fine company at Sir Joshua's: but he shines more in a partie quarrée than in a large circle, owing to his deafness. I forgot to tell you that Mr. Garrick has read Sir Eldred to us; and henceforward let never man attempt to read before me if he read worse.

Miss H. More to one of her sisters.

London, 1776.

Just returned from spending one of the most agreeable days of my life, with the female Mæcenas of Hill-street: she engaged me five or six days ago to dine with her, and had assembled half the wits of the age. The only fault that charming woman has is, that she is fond of collecting too many of them together at one time. There were nineteen persons assembled at dinner, but after the repast, she has a method of dividing her guests, or rather letting them assort themselves, into little

groups of five or six each. I spent my time in going from one to the other of these little societies, as I happened more or less to like the subjects they were discussing. Mrs. Scott, Mrs. Montagu's sister, a very good writer, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Barbauld, and a man of letters, whose name I have forgotten, made up one of these little parties. When we had canvassed two or three subjects, I stole off and joined in with the next group, which was composed of Mrs. Montagu, Dr. Johnson, the Provost of Dublin, and two other ingenious men. In this party there was a diversity of opinions, which produced a great deal of good argument and reasoning. There were several other groups less interesting to me, as they were more composed of rank than talent, and it was amusing to see how the people of sentiment singled out each other, and how the fine ladies and pretty gentlemen naturally slid into each others' society.

I had the happiness to carry Dr. Johnson home from Hill-street, though Mrs. Montagu publicly declared she did not think it prudent to trust us together, with such a declared affection on both sides. She said she was afraid of a Scotch elopement. He has invited himself to drink tea with us to-morrow, that we may read Sir Eldred together. I shall not tell you what he said of it, but to me the best part of his flattery was, that he repeats all the best stanzas by heart, with the energy, though not with the grace, of a Garrick.

London, 1776.

Let the Muses shed tears, for Garrick has this day sold the patent of Drury Lane Theatre, and will never act after this winter. *Sic transit gloria mundi!* He retires with all his blushing honours thick about him, his laurels as green as in their early spring. Who shall supply his loss to the stage? Who shall now hold the master-key of the human heart? Who direct the passions with more than magic power? Who purify the stage? and who, in short, direct and nurse my dramatic muse?

Yesterday was another of the few sun-shiny days with which human life is so scantily furnished. We spent it at Garrick's; he was in high good-humour, and inexpressibly agreeable. Here was likely to have been another jostling and intersecting of our pleasures; but as they knew Johnson would be with us at seven, Mrs. Garrick was so good as to dine a little after three, and all things fell out in comfortable succession. We were at the reading of a new tragedy, and insolently and unfeelingly pronounced against it. We got home in time: I hardly ever spent an evening more pleasantly or profitably. Johnson, full of wisdom and piety, was very communicative. To enjoy Dr. Johnson perfectly, one must have him to one's self, as he seldom cares to speak in mixed parties. Our tea was not over till nine, we then fell upon Sir Eldred: he read both

poems through, suggested some little alterations in the first, and did me the honour to write one whole stanza;* but in the Rock he has not altered a word. Though a tea-visit, he staid with us till twelve. I was quite at my ease, and never once asked him to eat (drink he never does any thing but tea); while you, I dare say, would have been fidgeted to death, and would have sent over half the town for chickens, and oysters, and asparagus, and Madeira. You see how frugal it is to be well-bred, and not to think of such vulgar renovation as eating and drinking.

London, 1776.

Again I am annoyed by the foolish absurdity of the present mode of dress. Some ladies carry on their heads a large quantity of fruit, and yet they would despise a poor useful member of society who carried it there for the purpose of selling it for bread. Some, at the back of their perpendicular caps, hang four or five ostrich feathers, of different colours, &c. Spirit of Addison! thou pure and gentle shade arise! thou who, with such fine humour, and such polished sarcasm, didst lash the cherry-coloured hood and the party patches; and cut down with a trenchant sickle a whole harvest of follies and absurdities! awake! for the follies thou didst lash were but the beginning of follies; and the absurdities thou didst censure were but the seeds of absurdities! Oh, that thy master-spirit, speaking and chiding in thy graceful page, could recall the blushes, and collect the scattered and mutilated remnants, of female modesty!

We find another letter from one of her sisters, written about the same time, from which we shall make a humorous extract.

London, 1776.

If a wedding should take place before our return, don't be surprised,—between the mother of Sir Eldred and the father of my much-loved Irene; nay, Mrs. Montagu says, if tender words are the precursors of connubial engagements, we may expect great things; for it is nothing but "child," "little fool," "love," and "dearest." After much critical discourse, he turns round to me, and with one of his most amiable looks, which must be seen to form the least idea of it, he says, "I have heard that you are engaged in the useful and honourable employment of teaching young ladies," upon which, with all the same ease, familiarity, and confidence we should have done had only our own dear Dr. Stonehouse been present, we entered upon the history of our birth, parentage, and education; showing how we were born with more desires than

* This stanza begins "My scorn has oft," &c.

guineas; and how, as years increased our appetites, the cupboard at home began to grow too small to gratify them; and how, with a bottle of water, a bed, and a blanket, we set out to seek our fortunes; and how we found a great house, with nothing in it; and how it was like to remain so, till looking into our knowledge-boxes, we happened to find a little *larning*, a good thing when land is gone, or rather none: and so at last, by giving a little of this little *larning* to those who had less, we got a good store of gold in return; but how, alas! we wanted the wit to keep it—"I love you both," cried the inamorato—"I love you all five—I never was at Bristol—I will come on purpose to see you—what! five women live happily together!—I will come and see you—I have spent a happy evening—I am glad I came—God for ever bless you, you live lives to shame duchesses." He took his leave with so much warmth and tenderness, we were quite affected at his manner.

If Hannah's head stands proof against all the adulation and kindness of the great folks here, why then I will venture to say nothing of this kind will hurt her hereafter. A literary anecdote.—Mrs. Medalle (Sterne's daughter) sent to all the correspondents of her deceased father, begging the letters which he had written to them; among other wits, she sent to Wilkes with the same request. He sent for answer, that as there happened to be nothing extraordinary in those he had received, he had burnt or lost them. On which, the faithful editor of her father's works sent back to say, that if Mr. Wilkes would be so good as to write a few letters in imitation of her father's style, it would do just as well, and she would insert them.—Two carriages at the door—Mrs. Boscawen and Sir Joshua; the latter to take us to an auction of pictures, the former paid a short visit, that she might not break in upon our engagements. Dr. Johnson and Hannah last night had a violent quarrel; till at length laughter ran so high on all sides that argument was confounded in noise; the gallant youth, at one in the morning, set us down at our lodgings.

From Miss Martha More to one of her sisters.

Hampton, 1776.

We have been passing three days at the temple of taste, nature, Shakspeare, and Garrick; where every thing that could please the ear, charm the eye, and gratify the understanding passed in quick succession. From dinner to midnight he entertained us in a manner infinitely agreeable. He read to us all the whimsical correspondence, in prose and verse, which, for many years, he had carried on with the first geniuses of this age. I have now seen him in his mellower light, when the world has been shaken off. He says he longs to enter into himself, and to study the more important duties of life, which he is determined upon doing: that his whole *domestique* shall be

under such regulations of order and sobriety as shall be both a credit to himself and an example to others. The next time we go, Hannah is to carry some of her writing; she is to have a little table to herself, and to continue her studies: and he is to do the same.

The following extracts are from the letters of Hannah More to her family.

London, 1776.

I dined in the Adelphi yesterday. It was a particular occasion—an annual meeting, where nothing but men are usually asked. I was however of the party, and an agreeable day it was to me. I have seldom heard so much wit, under the banner of so much decorum. I mention this, because I was told it was a day of license, and that everybody was to say what they pleased. Colman and Dr. Schomberg were of the party; the rest were chiefly old doctors of divinity. I had a private whisper that I must dine there again to-day, to assist at the celebration of the birth-day. We had a little snug dinner in the library. At six, I begged leave to come home, as I expected my *petite assemblée* a little after seven. Mrs. Garrick offered me all her fine things, but, as I hate admixtures of finery and meanness, I refused every thing except a little cream and a few sorts of cakes. They came at seven. The *dramatis personæ* were Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Garrick, and Miss Reynolds; my beaux were Dr. Johnson, Dean Tucker, and last, but not least in our love, David Garrick. You know that wherever Johnson is, the confinement to the tea-table is rather a durable situation; and it was an hour and a half before I got my enlargement. However, my ears were opened, though my tongue was locked, and they all staid till near eleven.

Garrick was the very soul of the company, and I never saw Johnson in such perfect good-humour. Sally knows we have often heard that one can never properly enjoy the company of these two unless they are together. There is great truth in this remark; for after the dean and Mrs. Boscawen (who were the only strangers) were withdrawn, and the rest stood up to go, Johnson and Garrick began a close encounter telling old stories, "e'en from their boyish days" at Lichfield. We all stood round them above an hour, laughing, in defiance of every rule of decorum and Chesterfield. I believe we should not have thought of sitting down or of parting, had not an impertinent watchman been saucily vociferous. Johnson outstaid them all, and sat with me half an hour.

I'll tell you the most ridiculous circumstance in the world. After dinner Garrick took up the Monthly Review (civil gentlemen, by-the-by, these Monthly Reviewers), and read "Sir Eldred" with all his pathos and all his graces. I think I never was so ashamed in my life; but he read it so superlatively,

that I cried like a child. Only think what a scandalous thing, to cry at the reading of one's own poetry! I could have beaten myself; for it looked as if I thought it very moving, which, I can truly say, is far from being the case. But the beauty of the jest lies in this: Mrs. Garrick twinkled as well as I, and made as many apologies for crying at her husband's reading, as I did for crying at my own verses. *She* got out of the scrape by pretending she was touched at the story, and *I* by saying the same thing of the reading. It furnished us with a great laugh at the catastrophe, when it would really have been decent to have been a little sorrowful.

London, 1776.

Did I ever tell you what Dr. Johnson said to me of my friend the Dean of Gloucester? I asked him what he thought of him. His answer was *verbatim* as follows: "I look upon the Dean of Gloucester to be one of the few excellent writers of this period. I differ from him in opinion, and have expressed that difference in my writings; but I hope what I wrote did not indicate what I did not feel, for I felt no acrimony. No person, however learned, can read his writings without improvement. He is sure to find something he did not know before." I told him the dean did not value himself on elegance of style.* He said he knew nobody whose style was more perspicuous, manly, and vigorous, or better suited to his subject. I was not a little pleased with this tribute to the worthy dean's merit, from such a judge of merit; that man, too, professedly differing from him in opinion.

Would you believe it? In the midst of all the pomps and vanities of this wicked town, I have taken it into my head to study like a dragon; I read four or five hours every day, and wrote ten hours yesterday. How long this will last I do not know—but I fear no longer than the bad weather. I wish you could see a picture Sir Joshua has just finished, of the prophet Samuel on his being called. "The gaze of young astonishment" was never so beautifully expressed. Sir Joshua tells me that he is exceedingly mortified when he shows this picture to some of the great—they ask him who Samuel was? I told him he must get somebody to make an Oratorio of Samuel, and then it would not be vulgar to confess they knew something of him. He said he was glad to find that I was intimately acquainted with that devoted prophet. He has also done a St. John, that bids fair for immortality. I tell him that

*Hannah More having once asked the dean, Whether it might not be advisable to polish his style rather more? "Oh, no," he replied, "they don't expect a fine style from me. All that I care for are the authenticity of my facts, and the truth of my principles." He never failed to communicate his political pamphlets to her; and when she represented to him that such subjects were out of the reach of her comprehension, he would answer, "Pish! no such thing! common sense will ever appeal to common sense."

I hope the poets and painters will at last bring the Bible into fashion, and that people will get to like it from taste, though they are insensible to its spirit, and afraid of its doctrines. I love this great genius, for not being ashamed to take his subjects from the most unfashionable of all books.

Keeping bad company leads to all other bad things. I have got the headache to-day, by raking out so late with that gay libertine Johnson. Do *you* know—*I* did not, that he wrote a quarter of the Adventurer? I made him tell me all that he wrote in the "fugitive pieces."

De L'Olme told me he thought Johnson's late political pamphlets were the best things he had written; but I regret that such men should ever write a word of politics.

Mrs. Garrick has obtained a ticket to carry me to the Pantheon with her and a party; but I could not get the better of my repugnance to these sort of places, and she was so good as to excuse me. I find my dislike of what are called public diversions greater than ever, except a play; and when Garrick has left the stage, I could be very well contented to relinquish plays also, and to live in London, without ever again setting my foot in a public place.

Hampton, 1776.

I enclose you a little sonnet I sent the Garricks on their birth-day. I had but an hour to write it in, and had the headache, or it would have been better.

SONNET ON MR. AND MRS. GARRICK'S BIRTH-DAY.

ADDRESSED TO THE RIVER THAMES, AND WRITTEN IN THE TEMPLE AT HAMPTON.

O silver Thames, O gentle river, tell,
Since first thy green waves through yon meadow stray'd,
Hast thou a more harmonious pair survey'd
Than in these fairy-haunted gardens dwell?

I sing not of his muse, for well I ween
My song's unmarked where every bard approves,
Nor of his magic powers, which must be *seen*,
Not *told*—for telling lessens what it loves.

Nor do I celebrate her form or face:
Inglorious praise! for other nymphs are fair,
And other nymphs may boast a transient grace;
Though they must boast it when she is not there.

Back to thy source, thou, gentle Thames, shalt flow,
Ere soul more tuned to soul, or mind to mind,
Thy margin ever green shall proudly show,
Or in her bands celestial concord bind.

Mrs. Boscawen has given me a very curious old Italian book,

of which there are very few copies in the world: she is always thinking of some little thing to oblige me.

When I come back from Hampton I shall change my lodgings; not that I have any particular objections to these, but those I have taken are much more airy, large, and elegant: besides the use, when I please, of the whole house, I shall have a bed-chamber and a dressing-room for my own particular company; the master and mistress are themselves well-behaved, sensible people, and keep good company; besides, they are fond of books, and can read, and have a shelf of books which they will lend me. The situation is pleasant and healthy—the centre house in the Adelphi.* Add to this, it is not a common lodging-house, they are careful whom they take in, and will have no people of bad character, or who keep irregular hours; so that on the whole, for the little time I remain in town, I think I shall be more comfortable in my new lodgings.

Adelphi, 1776.

Did I tell you we had a very agreeable day at Mrs. Boscawen's? I like Mr. Berenger† prodigiously. I met the Bunbury family at Sir Joshua's. Mr. Boswell (Corsican Boswell) was here last night; he is a very agreeable good-natured man; he perfectly adores Johnson; they have this day set out together for Oxford, Lichfield, &c., that the doctor may take leave of all his old friends and acquaintances previous to his great expedition across the Alps. I lament his undertaking such a journey at his time of life, with beginning infirmities; I hope he will not leave his bones on classic ground. I have here most spacious apartments, three rooms to myself. David Hume is at the point of death in a jaundice. Cadell told me to-day he had circulated six thousand of Price's book, and was rejoiced to hear that the Dean of Gloucester intended to answer it.

Adelphi, 1776.

We have had a great evening in the Adelphi: the principal people that I can now recollect were Lord and Lady Camden, their daughters, Lady Chatham and daughters, Lord Dudley, Mr. Rigby, Mrs. Montagu, the Dean of Derry and lady, Sir Joshua and his sister, Colman, Berenger, &c. &c.

You would take Lord Camden for an elderly physician, though I think there is something of genius about his nose. Did I excel in the descriptive, here would be a fine field for me to expatiate on the graces of the host and hostess, whose behaviour was all cheerfulness and good-breeding; but lords delight not me, no, nor ladies neither, unless they are very chosen ones.

* Garrick's town-house.

† Richard Berenger, Esq. many years gentleman of the horse and equerry to his late majesty. He wrote a history of Horsemanship.

A relation of the Duchess of Chandos died at the duchess's a few days ago, at the card-table; she was dressed most sumptuously—they stripped off her diamonds, stuck her upright in a coach, put in two gentlemen with her, and sent her home two hours after she was dead; at least so the story goes.

Baron Burland died as suddenly; after having been at the House of Lords he dined heartily, and was standing by the fire talking politics to a gentleman. So, you see, even London has its warnings, if it would but listen to them. These are two signal ones in one week; but the infatuation of the people is beyond any thing that can be conceived.

A most magnificent hotel in St. James's-street was opened last night for the first time, by the name of the "Savoir Vivre;" none but people of the very first rank were there, so you may conclude the diversion was cards; and in one night, the very first time the rooms were ever used, the enormous sum of sixty thousand pounds was lost. Heaven reform us!

We had the other night a conversazione at Mrs. Boscawen's. What a comfort for me that none of my friends play at cards. Soame Jenyns and the learned and ingenious Mr. Cambridge were of the party. We had a few sensible ladies, and a very agreeable day, till the world broke in upon us, and made us too large for conversation. The sensible Mrs. Walsingham was there, as was Mrs. Newton, who gave me many invitations to St. Paul's.* Mr. Jenyns was very polite to me, and as he, his lady, and I were the first visitants, he introduced me himself to everybody that came afterward, who were strangers to me. There is a fine simplicity about him, and a meek, innocent kind of wit, in Addison's manner, which is very pleasant. The kind Mrs. Boscawen had made another party for me at her house, with Mr. Berenger, who is everybody's favourite (even Dr. Johnson's), but I am unluckily engaged.

Cumberland's odes are come out. I tried to prevail on Mr. Cambridge to read them, but could not; he has a natural aversion to an ode, as some people have to a cat; one of them is pretty, but another contains a literal description of administering a dose of James's powders. Why will a man who has real talents attempt a species of writing for which he is so little qualified? But so little do we poor mortals know ourselves, that I should not be surprised if he were to prefer these odes to his comedies, which have real merit.

London, 1776.

I dined yesterday with Captain† and Mrs. Middleton. Tell Dr. Stonehouse that I recommended the translation of Saurin's Sermons to Captain Middleton and Mrs. Bouverie; and Captain

* The kindness and friendship of Bishop Newton and his lady to Mrs. H. More continued invariably through life.

† Afterward Lord Barham.

M. intends writing to the doctor about them. How nobly eloquent they are! One little peculiarity I remark,—his more frequent use of the word *vice* than generally occurs in religious writings. I think sin is a theological, vice a moral, and crime a judicial term. There are so few people I meet with in this good town to whom one can venture to recommend sermons, that the opportunity is not to be lost; though the misfortune is, that those who are most willing to read them happen to be the very people who least want them. Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Carter, and some other of my friends were there.

Mrs. Boscawen came to see me the other day with the duchess, in her gilt chariot, with four footmen (as I hear, for I happened not to be at home). It is not possible for any thing on earth to be more agreeable to my taste than my present manner of living. I am so much at my ease; have a great many hours at my own disposal, to read my own books and see my own friends; and, whenever I please, may join the most polished and delightful society in the world! Our breakfasts are little literary societies; there is generally company at meals, as they think it saves time, by avoiding the necessity of seeing people at other seasons. Mr. Garrick sets the highest value upon his *time* of anybody I ever knew. From dinner to tea we laugh, chat, and talk nonsense; the rest of his time is generally devoted to study. I detest and avoid public places more than ever, and should make a miserably bad fine lady! What most people come to London *for* would keep me *from* it. Garrick's verses on Sir Eldred make a great noise here: I enclose them.

ON SIR ELDRED OF THE BOWER, BY ROSCIUS

I.

Far from the reach of mortal grief,
Well, Stanhope, art thou fled;
Nor couldst thou, lord, now gain belief,
Tho' rising from the dead.

II.

Thy wit a female champion braves,
And blasts thy critic power;
She comes!—and in her hand she waves
Sir Eldred of the Bower.

III.

The victor's palm aloft she bears,
And sullen foes submit;
The laurel crown from man she tears,
And routs each lordly wit.

IV.

A female work if this should prove,
Cries out the beaten foe;
'Tis Pallas from the head of Jove,
Complete from top to toe.

V.

With feeling, elegance and force
Unite their matchless power;
And prove that from a heavenly source
Springs Eldred of the Bower.

VI.

True—cries the god of verse, 'tis mine,
And now the farce is o'er;
To vex proud man I wrote each line,
And gave them Hannah More.

Adelphi, 1776.

I had promised Mr. Burrows I would certainly go to hear him, at St. Clement's, last Sunday, but was again disappointed. At Hampton church, we heard a frivolous clergyman preach one of those light compositions which it is impossible for one ever to think of again.

Alas! I dare not lie in bed in a morning, for the Garricks are as much my conscience here as the doctor is at Bristol.* A few evenings ago we were at Mrs. Vesey's; Tessier read; we were a moderate party, not forty: the Duchess-dowager of Beaufort was there, Lady Betty Compton, Lord and Lady Spencer, Lord and Lady Bateman, and a dozen other lords and ladies for aught I know. The old duchess looks amazingly well; I do not know a finer woman of her age.

We expect a large party every minute to breakfast, all the sensible, ingenious French folks whom, I believe, I have mentioned before, with Lord North, &c. I find Mr. Boswell called upon you at Bristol, with Dr. Johnson; he told me so this morning, when he breakfasted here with Sir William Forbes and Dr. Johnson.

London, 1776.

We have been again spending three days at Hampton. On the first, we were visited by our noble neighbours, the Pembrokes; and on the third, we dined at Richmond, at Sir Joshua's, with a very agreeable party. It was select, though much too large to please me. There was hardly a person in company that I would not have chosen as eminently agreeable, but I would not have chosen them all together. Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Elliot, Edmund, Richard, and William Burke, Lord Mahon, David Garrick, and Sir Joshua. We had a great deal of laugh, as there were so many leaders among the patriots, and had a great deal of attacking and defending, with much wit and good humour.

Adelphi, 1776.

I wish it were possible for me to give you the slightest idea of the scene I was present at yesterday. Garrick would make me take his ticket to go to the trial of the Duchess of Kings-

* Dr. Stonehouse.

ton; a sight which, for beauty and magnificence, exceeded any thing which those who were never present at a coronation, or a trial by peers, can have the least notion of. Mrs. Garrick and I were in full dress by seven. At eight we went to the Duke of Newcastle's, whose house adjoins Westminster Hall, in which he has a large gallery, communicating with the apartments in his house. You will imagine the bustle of five thousand people getting into one hall! yet, in all this hurry, we walked in tranquilly. When they were all seated, and the king-at-arms had commanded silence on pain of imprisonment (which, however, was very ill observed), the gentleman of the black rod was commanded to bring in his prisoner. Elizabeth, calling herself Duchess-dowager of Kingston, walked in, led by black rod and Mr. la Roche, courtesying profoundly to her judges: when she bent, the lord-steward called out, "Madam, you may rise;" which, I think, was literally taking her up before she was down. The peers made her a slight bow. The prisoner was dressed in deep mourning: a black hood on her head, her hair modestly dressed and powdered; a black silk sack, with crape trimmings; black gauze deep ruffles, and black gloves. The counsel spoke about an hour and a quarter each. Dunning's manner is insufferably bad, coughing and spitting at every three words; but his sense and his expression pointed to the last degree: he made her grace shed bitter tears. I had the pleasure of hearing several of the lords speak, though nothing more than proposals on common things. Among these were Lyttleton, Talbot, Townsend, and Camden. The fair victim had four virgins in white behind the bar. She imitated her great predecessor, Mrs. Rudd, and affected to write very often, though I plainly perceived she only wrote as they do their love epistles on the stage, without forming a letter. I must not omit one of the best things: we had only to open a door to get at a very fine cold collation of all sorts of meats and wines, with tea, &c., a privilege confined to those who belonged to the Duke of Newcastle. I fancy the peeresses would have been glad of our places at the trial, for I saw Lady Derby and the Duchess of Devonshire with their workbags full of good things. Their rank and dignity did not exempt them from the "villanous appetites" of eating and drinking.

Foote says that the Empress of Russia, the Duchess of Kingston, and Mrs. Rudd are the three most extraordinary women in Europe; but the duchess disdainfully, and I think unjustly, excludes Mrs. Rudd from the honour of deserving to make one in the triple alliance. The duchess has but small remains of that beauty of which kings and princes were once so enamoured; she looked very much like Mrs. Pritchard; she is large and ill-shaped; there was nothing white but her face, and had it not been for that, she would have looked like a bale of bombasin. There was a great deal of ceremony, a

great deal of splendour, and a great deal of nonsense: they adjourned upon the most foolish pretences imaginable, and did NOTHING with such an air of business as was truly ridiculous. I forgot to tell you the duchess was taken ill, but performed it badly.

Adelphi, 1776.

We did not come to town till yesterday, and even then left Hampton with regret, as it is there we spend the pleasantest part of our time, uninterrupted by the idle, the gossiping, and the impertinent. On Tuesday, Lord and Lady Pembroke dined with us. The countess is a pretty woman, and my lord a good-humoured, lively, chatty man; but Roscius was, as usual, the life and soul of the company, and always says so many home things, pointed at the vices and follies of those with whom he converses, but in so indirect, well-bred, and good-humoured a manner, that everybody must love him, and none but fools are ever offended, or will expose themselves so much as to own they are. Politicians say that there is a great prospect of an accommodation with America. Heaven grant it, before more human blood is spilt! But even this topic has, I think, a little given place to the trial. For my part, I cannot see why there should be so much ceremony used to know whether an infamous woman has one or two husbands. I think a *lieutenant de police* would be a better judge for her than the peers, and I do not see why she should not be tried by Sir John Fielding, as a profligate of less note would have been.

Adelphi, 1776.

I have the great satisfaction of telling you that Elizabeth, calling herself Duchess-dowager of Kingston, was this very afternoon *undignified* and *unduchessed*, and very narrowly escaped being burned in the hand. If you had been half as much interested against this unprincipled, artful, licentious woman as I have, you will be rejoiced at it as I am. All the peers, but two or three (who chose to withdraw), exclaimed with great emphasis, "Guilty, upon my honour!" except the Duke of N——,* who said, "Guilty erroneously, but not intentionally." Great nonsense, by-the-by, but peers are privileged.

On Wednesday we had a very large party to dinner, consisting chiefly of French persons of distinction and talents, who are come over to take a last look at the beams of the great dramatic sun before he sets. We had beaux esprits, femmes sçavantes, academicians, &c., and no English person except Mr. Gibbon, the Garricks, and myself; we had not one English sentence the whole day. Last night we were at our friends the Wilmots', in Bloomsbury-square. There was a

* Newcastle.

great deal of good company—the Bishop of Worcester, his lady, Sir Ralph Paine and lady, Mrs. Boscawen, and half a score others.

This morning Lord Camden breakfasted with us. He was very entertaining. He is very angry that the Duchess of Kingston was not burned in the hand. He says, as he was once a professed lover of hers, he thought it would look ill-natured and ungallant for him to propose it; but that he should have acceded to it most heartily, though he believes he should have recommended a cold iron.

This evening I am engaged to spend with a foreigner. He is a Dane, unjustly deprived of his father's fortune by his mother's marrying a second time. I have never yet seen him, but I hear that all the world is to be there, which I think is a little unfeeling, as he is low-spirited at times, even to madness. For my part, from what I have heard, I do not think the poor young man will live out the night.

Adelphi, 1776.

I imagine my last was not so ambiguous but that you saw well enough I staid in town to see Hamlet, and I will venture to say, that it was such an entertainment as will probably never again be exhibited to an admiring world. But this general panegyric can give you no idea of *my* feelings; and particular praise would be injurious to his excellences.

In every part he filled the whole soul of the spectator, and transcended the most finished idea of the poet. The requisites for Hamlet are not only various, but opposed. In him they are all united, and, as it were, concentrated. One thing I must particularly remark, that, whether in the simulation of madness, in the sinkings of despair, in the familiarity of friendship, in the whirlwind of passion, or in the meltings of tenderness, he never once forgot he was a prince; and in every variety of situation and transition of feeling, you discovered the highest polish of fine breeding and courtly manners.

Hamlet experiences the conflict of many passions and affections, but filial love ever takes the lead; *that* is the great point from which he sets out, and to which he returns; the others are all contingent and subordinate to it, and are cherished or renounced, as they promote or obstruct the operation of this leading principle. Had you seen with what exquisite art and skill Garrick maintained the subserviency of the less to the greater interests, you would agree with me, of what importance to the perfection of acting is that consummate good sense which always pervades every part of his performances.

To the most eloquent expression of the eye, to the handwriting of the passions on his features, to a sensibility which tears to pieces the hearts of his auditors, to powers so unparalleled, he adds a judgment of the most exquisite accuracy, the fruit of long experience and close observation, by which he

preserves every gradation and transition of the passions, keeping all under the control of a just dependence and natural consistency. So naturally, indeed, do the ideas of the poet seem to mix with his own, that he seemed himself to be engaged in a succession of affecting situations, not giving utterance to a speech, but to the instantaneous expression of his feelings, delivered in the most affecting tones of voice, and with gestures that belong only to nature. It was a fiction as delightful as fancy, and as touching as truth. A few nights before I saw him in "Abel Drugger;" and had I not seen him in both, I should have thought it as possible for Milton to have written "Hudibras," and Butler "Paradise Lost," as for one man to have played "Hamlet" and "Drugger" with such excellence. I found myself, not only in the best place, but with the best company in the house, for I sat next the orchestra, in which were a number of my acquaintance (and those no vulgar names), Edmund and Richard Burke, Dr. Warton, and Sheridan.

Have you seen an ode to Mr. Pinchbeck, by the author of the "Heroic Epistle?" There is a little slight sarcasm on Cumberland, the Dean of Gloucester, and Dr. Johnson. There is something of wit in it, but I think it is by no means worthy of the author of the "Heroic Epistle," which is, in my opinion, the best satire, both for matter and versification, that has appeared since the "Dunciad." I do not include Johnson's two admirable imitations of "Juvenal," which are more in the manner of Pope's other satires.

Extract of a letter from Miss H. More to the Rev. Dr. Stonehouse.

May, 1776.

I have at last had the entire satisfaction to see Garrick in "Hamlet." I would not wrong him myself so much as to tell you what I think of it; it is sufficient that you have seen him; I pity those who have not. Posterity will never be able to form the slightest idea of his pretensions. The more I see him, the more I wonder and admire. Whenever he does any thing capital, they are so kind as to get me into the pit, which increases the pleasure ten-fold. He has acted all his comic characters for the last time. I have seen him within these three weeks take leave of Benedict, Sir John Brute, Kitely, Abel Drugger, Archer, and Leon. It seems to me, on these occasions, as if I had been assisting at the funeral obsequies of the different poets. I feel almost as much pain as pleasure. He is quite happy in the prospect of his release.

Miss H. More to Mrs. Gwatkin.

Adelphi, May 12, 1776.

A few nights before I saw Garrick in Hamlet, I had seen him

in Abel Drugger; and, had I not seen him in both, I should have thought that it would have been as impossible for Milton to have written Hudibras, and Butler Paradise Lost, as for the same man to have played Hamlet and Drugger with such superlative and finished excellence. The more admirable he is, the more painful it is to reflect that I am now catching his departing glories. He is one of those summer suns which shine brightest at their setting. Within these three weeks, he has appeared in Brute, Leon, Drugger, Benedict, Archer, &c. for the last time; and it appears like assisting at the funeral obsequies of these individual poets. When I see him play any part for the last time, I can only compare my mixed sensations of pain and pleasure to what I suppose I should feel, if a friend were to die and leave me a rich legacy. There is a certain sentiment of gratification and delight in the acquisition; but as you are beginning to indulge in it, it is all of a sudden checked, by recollecting on what terms you possess it, and that you purchase your pleasure at the costly price of losing him to whom you owe it.

I wrote the above two or three days ago, and intended to have sent it immediately; but happening to show it to Mrs. G., she was so pleased with my criticism of Hamlet and the performance, that they insisted on having a copy. Though they paid my foolish letter an undeserved compliment, yet I could not refuse to comply, and not having time to transcribe it, is the reason you did not hear from me sooner.

I am surprised to find myself still here. Could I have had the least idea of my remaining so long after I wrote you last, I should not foolishly have deprived myself of the satisfaction of hearing from you. But though I have not heard *from* you, I have frequently heard *of* you. I fancy my sisters will have set out on their western excursion before I shall see Bristol. I doubt not but they will find it a very pleasant scheme, and to Martha I hope it will be a beneficial one.

I last night saw Don Felix for the first time; it is an elegant and pleasing part, but Mrs. Yates did great injustice to the genteel character of Violante, in which Mrs. Barry got so much reputation when she played it with Mr. Garrick. On Monday night he played King Lear, and it is literally true that my spirits have not yet recovered from the shock they sustained. I generally think the last part I see him in the greatest; but in regard to that night, it was the universal opinion that it was one of the greatest scenes ever exhibited. I called to-day in Leicester Fields, and Sir Joshua declared it was full three days before he got the better of it. The eagerness of people to see him is beyond any thing you can have an idea of. You will see half a dozen duchesses and countesses of a night, in the upper boxes: for the fear of not seeing him at all has humbled those who used to go, not for the purpose of seeing,

but of being seen, and they now courtesy to the ground for the worst places in the house.

I dined lately with your neighbour, Mr. Elliot, whom I like exceedingly; Mr. Gibbon, the three Burkes, Lord Mahon, and Lord Pitt were of the party. What a list of patriots! A few nights ago, we had an agreeable evening at Mrs. Vesey's; you know she is a favourite of mine, and indeed of everybody that has the pleasure of knowing her.

We go to-morrow to smell the lilacs and syringas at Hampton. I long for the sweet tranquillity of that delicious retreat. We generally spend a day or two in a week there, particularly Sunday, which is no small relief to me.

How does your garden grow? Are your shrubs flourishing? I reckon the Bristol misses will be delighted with your charming prospect. My love to Squire Edward. I have not time to look over this scrawl. My kind regards at the vicarage. Adieu, dear madam,

Yours, constantly and sincerely,

H. More.

I have been to the Adelphi. Garrick gave me the history of his reading to the king and queen, and went through the fable of the "Blackbird and Royal Eagle," which was his prologue. It is really very lively and entertaining. Some part of it is affecting, where he speaks of the sprightly blackbird, who was famous for his imitative powers, and could exactly mimic from the tender notes of the nightingale, to the low comic noises of the crow and magpie. But one day happening to look on his once fine glossy plumage, he found that his feathers began to turn gray, his eye had lost its lustre; and he also began to be lame. This determined him to give up his mimicry, and he resolved to be silent, and not hop about from tree to tree, but confine himself to one snug bush. The royal eagle, however, hearing of the talents of the lively creature, sent for him to court, and insisted on hearing him sing. This honour overturned all his prudent resolution; he found his feathers were restored to their native black, his eye resumed its fire, and he was himself again.

I could not get away till late, though I was engaged at Mrs. Boscawen's, to meet by appointment a party. It was a *conversazione*, but composed of rather too many people; one is used to small parties there, which I like much better. To my mortification, I arrived the last of the whole company. I was placed between the Duchess of Beaufort and Lady Edgcombe; these two ladies, with Mr. Jenyns and myself, made a snug group. My old acquaintance Mr. Burrows was there, Mr. and Mrs. Cole, Lady Juliana Penn, and many other people of quality.

London, 1776.

Yesterday good and dear Mrs. Boscawen came herself to fetch me to meet at dinner a lady I have long wished to see. This was Mrs. Delany; she was a Granville, and niece to the celebrated poet Lord Lansdown. She was the friend and intimate of Swift. She tells a thousand pleasant anecdotes relative to the publication of the Tatler. As to the Spectator, it is almost too modern for her to speak of it. She was in the next room, and heard the cries of alarm when Guiscard stabbed Lord Oxford. In short, she is a living library of knowledge; and time, which has so highly matured her judgment, has taken very little from her graces or her liveliness. She has invited me to visit her; a singular favour from one of her years and character. Last night, I was again at Mrs. Boscawen's, where there was a very splendid assembly; there were above forty people, most of them of the first quality, but I am sure I shall not remember half of them. The Duchess of Beaufort, Lady Scarsdale, her sister, Lord and Lady Radnor, Lady Ranelagh, Lady Onslow, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, Lord and Lady Clifford, Captain and Mrs. Middleton, and Mrs. Bouverie. Though the party was so large, the evening was far from being disagreeable, for, as there were only two card-tables, one could always make a little party for conversation. Our hostess was all herself, easy, well-bred, and in every place at once; and so attentive to every individual, that I dare say everybody, when they got home, thought as I did, that they alone had been the immediate object of her attention.

I forgot to tell you I have just been to see Mrs. Montagu. I made it a point to go in the morning, thinking I might stand a chance of catching her alone, which indeed, to my great delight, I did; but just as we were beginning to enter into interesting conversation, the world, as usual, broke in.

CHAPTER III.

In the beginning of June, 1776, Hannah More returned to Bristol after a six months' absence, four of which had been passed between the Adelphi and Hampton. It was remarked by her friends and family, that success and applause had made no change in her deportment. She brought back her native simplicity unsullied by the contact. The constitution of her mind was so opposed to affectation and art, that rank, literature, and fashion saw the bird escape as from the snare of the fowler, without losing a feather of its natural plumage, to

soar at large in its own free element, and revisit its accustomed scenes.

We will here introduce two or three letters which passed about this time.

H. More to Mr. Garrick.

June 10, 1776.

I have devoured the newspapers for the last week with the appetite of a famished politician, to learn if my general had yet laid down arms; but I find you go on with a true American spirit, destroying thousands of his majesty's liege subjects, breaking the limbs of many, and the hearts of all. When I promised you I would not plague you with any of my nonsense till you were disengaged, could I possibly divine you would be so very good as to honour me with a letter?—ay, and a charming letter too, albeit a little one—it made me so proud and happy! But you are so used to make folks proud and happy that it is nothing to you; and what would be a violent effort to other people, slides naturally into your ordinary course of action.

I think, by the time this reaches you, I may congratulate you on the end of your labours and the completion of your fame—a fame which has had no parallel, and will have no end. Yet whatever reputation the world may ascribe to you, I, who have had the happy privilege of knowing you intimately, shall always think you derived your greatest glory from the temperance with which you enjoyed it, and the true greatness of mind with which you lay it down. Surely, to have suppressed your talents in the moment of your highest capacity for exerting them, does as much honour to your heart as the exertion itself did to your dramatic character; but I cannot trust myself with this subject, because I am writing to the man himself; yet I ought to be indulged, for is not the recollection of my pleasures all that is left me of them? Have I not seen in one season that man act seven-and-twenty times, and rise each time in excellence, and shall I be silent? Have I not spent three months under the roof of that man and his dear charming lady, and received from them favours that would take me another three months to tell over, and shall I be silent?

But highly as I enjoy your glory (for I do enjoy it most heartily, and seem to partake it too, as I think a ray of it falls on all your friends), yet I tremble for your health. It is impossible you can do so much mischief to the nerves of other people without hurting your own, in Richard especially, where your murders are by no means confined to the Tower; but you assassinate your whole audience who have hearts. I say, I tremble lest you should suffer for all this; but it is now over, as I hope are the bad effects of it upon yourself. You may

break your wand at the end of your trial, when you lay down the office of haut intendant of the passions; but the enchantment it raised you can never break, while the memories and feelings remain of those who were ever admitted into the magic circle.

This letter is already of a good impudent length, and to the person, of all others, who has the least time to read nonsense. I will not prolong my impertinence but to beg and conjure that I may hear a little bit about your finishing night. The least scrap—printed or manuscript—paragraph or advertisement—merry or serious—verse or prose, will be thankfully received, and hung up in the temple of reliques.

Pray tell my sweet Mrs. Garrick I live on the hope of hearing from her. And tell her farther that she and you have performed a miracle, for you have loaded one person with obligations, and have not made an ingrate.

Viva V. M. mille annos.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1776.

I wish you could have seen with what delight I received your kind and agreeable letter, my dear madam. It was only a change from talking about you to talking with you; for it came precisely as a gentleman went out of the door with whom I had held a long dispute upon your subject. That gentleman was Mr. Cambridge, and the dispute was about your charming *Dragon*,* which he admired beyond what I can tell you; and says it must absolutely be printed, lest a false copy get out. I did not contend that it *must not* be printed, but I assured him I would not give him a copy of it. He said he had almost learned it by heart, only twice hearing it read by Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom I lent it, under an oath not to *take* or *give* a copy of it; which condition he strictly kept, like a faithful knight; but he too is of Mr. Cambridge's opinion, both in admiring this charming bagatelle and in desiring that it should be printed. I trust then, my dear madam, you will yield to these advisers, since both, you will allow, have good taste, and are good judges. Mrs. Walsingham is likewise a wonderful admirer of dear honest Dragon. Certainly I waited for your permission to introduce him to her, and they have been acquainted these two months, but she admires him every day more and more.

Mrs. Montagu is returned safe and well from Paris. I had a very pleasant letter from Chaillot. Perhaps you have heard her admirable *bon mot*, in answer to Voltaire's calling Shakspeare *un fumier*. She said, "Il en avoit le sort savoir d'enricher des terres ingrates." You know Voltaire is reckoned to have stolen a great deal from Shakspeare, and he certainly

* An ode to Mr. Garrick's house dog, called Dragon.

is not grateful enough to own it. It is supposed that his anger against poor M. Le Tourneaux and the translators is on account of the thefts aforesaid, which will soon be made manifest to all France. Mrs. M. was placed within sight and hearing of a Sceance d'Academie, at the Louvre; when M. d'Alembert read something from Voltaire, still very abusive against Shakspeare or his translators.

She was much offended at one of their churches. The preacher made a pause after the first part of his discourse, and was clapped so as to delay his beginning the second. Mrs. M., expressing her notion of the impropriety of this, was answered, that it was only on St. Louis's day that this sort of compliment was paid to a sermon, which was then considered rather as a political declamation.

Adieu, my dear madam, believe me your truly affectionate

F. B.

In April, 1777, she paid a visit to some relations in Norfolk, passing through London in her way: and we find several letters to her family, during her visit, giving a very pleasant account of her tour, and of her intercourse with some of her kindred.

1777.

We arrived at Bungay a little before nine. In my way thither, Thorpe Hall, where my father was born, was pointed out to me. Our cousin Cotton's house is about a quarter of a mile out of the town: it is large, elegant, and very handsomely furnished. Bungay is a much better town than I expected, very clean and pleasant. I am very glad, however, that the house is a little way out of it.

On Tuesday, we went to dine at Mr. John Cotton's, a romantic farm-house, buried in the obscurity of a deep wood. A great number of Cottons were assembled, of all ages, sexes, and characters. The old lady of the house told me that my father lay at her brother's house the last night he spent in this country. She took a great deal of pains to explain to me genealogies, alliances, and intermarriages, not one word of which can I remember. The table and the guests groaned with the hospitality of the entertainers, and we had wines that would not have disgraced the table of a Bristol alderman. I am at a loss what to do about the book which I hear Baretti has sent me. As I have not seen it, I know not what to say. It is but cold satisfaction to an author to be thanked for his book, unless he is complimented for it too; and when an author really deserves praise, nothing is more delightful or more proper than to give it. A slowness to applaud betrays a cold temper, or an envious spirit. I am very well. I eat brown bread and custards like a native; and we have a pretty, agreeable, laudable custom of getting tipsy twice a day upon Herefordshire cider. The other night we had a great deal of company, eleven damsels,

to say nothing of men. I protest I hardly do them justice, when I pronounce that they had, among them, on their heads, an acre and a half of shrubbery, besides slopes, grass-plats, tulip-beds, clumps of pionies, kitchen-gardens, and green-houses.* Mrs. Cotton and I had an infinite deal of entertainment out of them, though, to our shame be it spoken, some of them were cousins; but I have no doubt that they held in great contempt our roseless heads and leafless necks.

1777.

We are just returned from an excursion through Norfolk, of about one hundred and sixty miles, to the extreme verge of the county, and nothing was ever more agreeable. Mr. and Mrs. Cotton and myself went comfortably in their chariot; and the only interruption was an attack of one of my headaches. As I do not excel in descriptions, you will not expect a minute detail of every thing I saw; however, as I know it will entertain my father even to know that I have been to such and such places, I will mention some that I can recollect. After Norwich, Dereham, and Swaffham, we went to the seat of the late Sir Andrew Fountaine, a very agreeable house, well-furnished, with a few good pictures, and one or two fine statues; many curiosities, particularly a large closet, furnished with the most beautiful Delft ware that can be imagined, much prettier, and more showy, than china. The housekeeper, with an urbanity rarely to be found among the dependants of the great, very obligingly entertained us with cakes and wine.

We come now to Castle Acre, a very fine piece of ruins, which it would cost an honest citizen who loves bow-windows, highway prospects, Chinese railing, chapel-looking stables, and steeples upon malt-houses, a thousand a-year to keep in repair. It is not so large as Kenilworth, nor so beautiful as Tintern; but it has a considerable share of magnificence, and no small portion of beauty. It is so old that tradition itself does not pretend to say when it was built; but conjecture says, in her usual random language, that it has been destroyed a thousand years. From the triumphs of time, we were conducted to those of genius. Rainham is the seat of Lord Townsend, of which it is said that it was designed by Inigo Jones. It is a handsome, commodious, well-furnished house; with a few very good pictures, but one of Belisarius surpassingly excellent. We next came to Houghton Hall. As we rode up to it, I could not but look with veneration, in spite of all the littleness of party and the feuds of faction, on this edifice, built by the man who gave to Europe, for twenty years, the blessing of

* To this incredible but fashionable folly Garrick put an end, by appearing in the character of Sir John Brute, dressed in female attire, with his cap decorated with a profusion of every sort of vegetable,—an immensely large carrot being dependent from each side.

uninterrupted peace.* I will give you a description of it to-morrow. But no—description is at an end: for I might as well attempt any other thing impossible, as to give you the faintest idea of this truly splendid and princely dwelling. The pictures form by far the finest private collection in this kingdom; they are valued at more than two hundred thousand pounds. Claudes, Titians, and Salvators are to be seen in the most delightful profusion; and most of these pieces are in the very best manner of their respective masters. The mind is almost bewildered by the beauty and number of these exquisite works.

The next place worthy of observation is Holkham Hall, the residence of the present Mr. Coke, and built by the late Lord Leicester. It is entirely of white brick, and, take it for inside and outside, state and commodiousness, beauty and elegance, I never saw any thing comparable to it. The pictures are many and charming; some exquisite Guidos, particularly St. Catherine, and a Cupid inexpressibly fine. There are many admirable statues, a number of antiques, and some of the finest drapery I ever saw. In the article of sculpture, however, it yields to Wilton, as much as it exceeds most other places. There is a hall of pink-veined marble, of immense size, superior to any thing of the kind in this nation; round it is a colonnade of pink and white marble fluted. There is at Houghton so exquisite a dining-room, with marble recesses, columns, and cisterns, and so luxurious, so cool, so charming, that I fancied myself at the villa of Pliny, or of Lucullus; and though I cannot bear oysters, yet I could have eaten some conchylia of the lake we saw out of the window; and I drank, in idea, a glass of Falernian, of twenty consulships, cooled by the elemental nymph. The next place deserving remark was Blickling; a very delightful seat, belonging to Lord Buckinghamshire. The situation is highly pleasing; more so to me than any I have seen in the east. You admire Houghton, but you wish for Blickling; you look at Houghton with astonishment, at Blickling with desire. There is there a princely library of wit and genius; forgive me for the epithet. I know it is a degrading one, but it popped out unawares. It is too much like what Voltaire said of the King of Prussia's poems, that they were *royal* verses. The park, wood, and water of this place are superior to those of any of the neighbouring estates. But the charms of nature in this county are of the middling, calm, and pacific sort; she does not put forth her bolder, stronger beauties. The striking, the grand, and the picturesque are here unknown. Brandon hill would be an alp in this country.

Between Aylsham and Norwich we went a little out of the road to see some famous mills. But the crane and the wheel are not quite so entertaining to me as the instruments of

* Sir Robert Walpole.

Reynolds or Nollekens; though it must be confessed they are more necessary to the comfort of society; for even I find that the sickle does more for my existence than the chisel.

1777.

We are just returned from spending a few days with Mrs. Cotton's father and mother: they live very genteelly, have a noble garden, a handsome coach, &c. Their other daughter was married to a man of very good fashion, and their niece to Lord Hume. She was down on a visit at Ormsby. Her lord, in return for the large fortune she brought him, makes her a very fashionable, negligent husband. I saw her on Sunday, poor thing! She sighs, and is no countess at her heart. I have just received a present from the author of a new publication; it is a descriptive poem, called *Heath Hill*. How the bard could think it worth his pains to look for me in this nook of creation, I cannot conceive. It seems to be very pretty. I have had a letter from Mrs. Barbauld, so full of elegance and good-nature, with an invitation so frank and earnest, that I cannot leave the country without going to see her. I like my Brockdish cousins very well; she is a chatty, sensible woman, and he as deep in divinity as ever. I scarcely ever met with any person that had spent so much time, with so little detriment to his taste and manners, in controversial reading. It has left him very moderate and very charitable. I am quite a nobody in debate *here*, though I made such a figure lately in explaining Arianism, Socinianism, and all the isms, to Mr. Garrick.

They rise here at five, and go to bed at nine; quite the thing for me, you know; for my morning headaches, alas!* preclude early rising; and while they have been asleep at night, I have gone through Dr. Maclaine's answer to Soame Jenyns. There is a good deal of wit and learning, and, I believe, truth and solidity, in some of his objections; others I think false and trivial, and his manner of stating them unfair. I do love Jenyns, but I do not contend for every part of his book: he is but a sucking child in Christianity, and I am afraid has represented religion as a very uncomfortable thing. The Deists

* In her early life, as well as in her declining years, Hannah More was subject to successive illnesses, which threw great impediments in the way of her intellectual exertions. She used to say that her frequent attacks of illness were a great blessing to her, independently of the prime benefit of cheapening life and teaching patience; for they induced a habit of industry not natural to her, and taught her to make the most of her *well* days. She laughingly added, it had taught her also to contrive employment for her sick ones; that from habit she had learned to suit her occupations to every gradation of the measure of capacity she possessed. "I never," she said, "afford a moment of a healthy day to transcribe, or put stops, or cross t's, or dot my i's. So that I find the lowest stage of my understanding may be turned to some account, and save better days for better things. I have learned from it also to avoid procrastination, and that idleness which often attends unbroken health."

will triumph at Maclaine's book, and exclaim, "See how these Christians disagree!" Our cousins are very much concerned, and so am I, that their son is so fond of Bolingbroke and Hume. He is much too fashionable in his principles, though I believe very correct in his conduct. We frequently give each other, in our indirect warfare, broad hints about infidelity and *methodism*.

After service yesterday morning I was very politely accosted by every well-dressed person in the congregation, desiring to see me at their houses. The invitations were so warm and numerous that I was quite at a loss what to do. Among these kind people was an elderly gentleman, who says he is the oldest friend my father has in the world; a friendship of seventy years is something like: he was delighted to see me. I find Mr. Cotton was one of eight gentlemen who were spirited enough to subscribe money towards building a house for their worthy minister. I have long ago found out that hardly any but plain frugal people ever do generous things. Our cousin, Mr. Cotton, who I dare say is often ridiculed for his simplicity and frugality, could yet lay down two hundred pounds without being sure of ever receiving a shilling interest, for the laudable purpose of establishing a man of merit, to whom he is still a very considerable contributor. This is commonly the case; and I am apt to conceive a prejudice against everybody who makes a great figure, and to suspect those who *talk* generously.

I went to Mrs. Barbauld's on Thursday, intending only to spend one day: but the muses are such fascinating witches that there is no getting away from them. We had an agreeable addition to our party, a Mr. Forster, who had sailed round the world, and had published his voyages in two volumes quarto. So that for a little remote village in Suffolk, we do not make up a bad society. Mrs. B. and I have found out, that we feel as little envy and malice towards each other as though we had neither of us attempted to "build the lofty rhyme," though she says "this is what the envious and malicious can never be brought to believe."

Mr. Garrick to Hannah More.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Write you an epilogue! give you a pinch of snuff! By the greatest good luck in the world, I received your letter when I was surrounded with ladies and gentlemen, setting out upon a party to go up the Thames. Our expedition will take us seven or eight days upon the most limited calculation. They would hardly allow me a moment to write this scrawl: I snatched up the first piece of paper (and a bad one it is) to tell you how unhappy I am that I cannot confer upon you so small a favour directly. If you will let me know immediately, by a line

directed to me at the Adelphi, for whom you intend the epilogue, and what are her or his strong marks of character in the play (for my copy is in town, or with Miss Young), I will do my best on my return. I must desire you not to rely upon me this time, on account of my present situation; I could as soon sleep in a whirlwind as write among these ladies, and I shall be so fatigued with talking myself and hearing them talk, or I could sit up all night to obey your commands. Prepare one, I beseech you, for fear I should not have a day for composing an epilogue. Let me know what subject you choose, what character is to speak it, and every thing else about it, and when it is to be acted, and if not now, I will most certainly scribble something for the next time. Should I be drowned, I hope you will excuse me, and write my epitaph.

With my best and warmest wishes to you, your sisters, and the whole blood of the Stonehouses,

I am, most sincerely,

Your friend and humble servant,

D. GARRICK.

P.S.—I write upon a full gallop; the provisions are on board —my wife calls (who begs her compliments), and that is a voice I always obey.

H. More to David Garrick.

Bungay, June 16, 1777.

I beg to return you my hearty thanks for your goodness in sending me your delightful prologue. That you should think me not unworthy to possess so great a treasure flatters more than my vanity; and that you should send it to me so soon makes it doubly gratifying.

I have read and re-read it with all the malice of a friend, and pronounce that I never read a sweeter or more beautiful thing. The first stanza is strikingly descriptive; the second, elegantly pathetic; the image of the sun and shower very fine, and the third is highly poetical. The truth of the allusion is not once violated throughout, but is maintained with great spirit and exactness—the two extreme and most difficult points to attain, I apprehend, in fable-writing. There is great ease, too, in your versification, without the flimsiness which too often attends irregular numbers. I have written my sincere sentiments with the same frankness I should have done had they been less in favour of the poet. I speak with the more confidence of this composition, as I have now an opportunity, by reading it myself, of forming a fairer judgment than I could have done from your reciting it.

We have at this place the "tragedians of the city" of Norwich, who sojourn here a month once in two years, in their progress through the two counties. The dramatic furor rages terribly among the people—the more so, I suppose, from being

allowed to vent itself so seldom. Everybody goes to the play every night—that is, every other night, which is as often as they perform. Visiting, drinking, and even card-playing are for this happy month suspended; nay, I question if, like Lent, it does not stop the celebration of weddings, for I do not believe there is a damsel in the town who would spare the time to be married during this rarely-occurring scene of festivity. It must be confessed, however, the good folks have no bad taste.

You are the favourite bard of Bungay: to prove that this is truth, I must tell you that I have already been to "The Maid of Oaks" and "The Clandestine Marriage;" and among this week's amusements, already given out, are "Cymon," "Bon Ton," and "Little Gipsey." A certain Mr. Ibbott played Mr. Heidelburgh more than tolerably, and a pretty-looking Mrs. Simpson was very pleasing in Fanny. Griffiths, the Norwich manager, did Lord Ogleby, but was rather languid than elegant, and mistook a feebleness of exertion for refinement of breeding; yet, in my poor judgment, he rather did it deficiently than falsely. I think the part of Henry was pretty well conceived, though inadequately acted, by one Dancer. It was received with great applause. I find I have been sadly mauled in some of the daily papers. I cannot get to see them. I did not think I was of consequence enough: they tell me it is Kenrick.

I hear Baretti has been civil enough to send me one of his books on Shakspeare, but I have it not here; it is a strange undertaking,—slippery ground, I think; an Italian author to write about our divine English dramatist, and that in the French language!

The day before I came to town I received a present from De Lolme of his new book; I have only dipped into it. The truth is, I am half afraid to read it, for it was accompanied with a very sprightly, agreeable letter, apologizing for some queer things in it, which he expects I shall censure very much, or, at least, look very grave at. I suppose, however, it may be safely read by a good Protestant; it being, I suspect, a satire on the foolish austerities of the Church of Rome; something in Stillingfleet's way.

Many thanks, dear sir, for your good and wholesome advice about my play. I do nothing, except regret my own idleness. I tremble for my fifth act; but I am afraid I shall never make others tremble at it.

My love and duty to my sweet Mrs. Garrick, and my thankful compliments to the young lady to whose transcription I am so much obliged; she is astonishingly correct,—not the smallest error. Pardon this nonsense, dear sir, in

Your obliged and obedient,

H More.

From Hannah More to her sister.

Hampton, 1777.

As soon as I got to London, I drove straight to the Adelphi, where to my astonishment I found a coach waiting for me to carry me to Hampton.

Upon my arrival here I was immediately put in possession of my old chamber. Garrick is all good-humour, vivacity, and wit. While I think of it, I must treat you with a little distich which Mrs. Barbauld wrote extempore, on my showing my Felix buckles (the elegant buckles which Garrick wore the last time he ever acted, and with which he presented me as a relic).

> "Thy buckles, O Garrick, thy friend may now use,
> But no mortal hereafter shall tread in thy shoes."

Last Wednesday we went to town for a night, when Dr. Burney sat an hour or two with us. We have had a great deal of company here,—lords, ladies, wits, critics, and poets. Last Saturday we had a very agreeable day. Our party consisted of about twelve; for these dear people understand society too well ever to have very large parties. The Norfolk Wyndham, Sheridan, and Lord Palmerston said the most lively things. But Roscius surpassed himself, and literally kept the table in a roar for four hours. He told his famous story of "Jack Pocklington" in a manner so entirely new, and so infinitely witty, that the company have done nothing but talk of it ever since. I have often heard of this story: it is of a person who came to offer himself for the stage, with an impediment in his speech. He gives the character, too, in as strong a manner as Fielding could have done.

After supper, on Sunday, Garrick read to us, out of Paradise Lost, that fine part on diseases and old age. Dr. Cadogan and his agreeable daughter have spent a day and a night here. The doctor gave me some lectures on anatomy, and assures me that I am now as well acquainted with secretion, concoction, digestion, and assimilation as many a wise-looking man in a great wig. We go, on Friday, into Hampshire, to Mr. Wilmot's. Lord and Lady Bathurst are to be of the party. I should be apt to suspect that the presence of a lord-chancellor was not very likely to contribute to mirth; but I don't think all the great officers of state put together could have gravity enough to damp the fire of Garrick, or blunt the edge of his wit. As soon as we return from Farnborough Place, I shall quit the rosy bowers of Hampton, and conclude my very long and pleasant campaign.

From the same to the same.

Farnborough Place, 1777.

We reached this place yesterday morning. You will judge of the size of the house, when I tell you there are eleven visiters, and all perfectly well accommodated. The Wilmots live in the greatest magnificence; but what is a much better thing, they live also rationally and sensibly. On Sunday evening, however, I was a little alarmed; they were preparing for music (sacred music was the *ostensible* thing), but before I had time to feel uneasy, Garrick turned round and said, "Nine,* you are a *Sunday woman*; retire to your room—I will recall you when the music is over."

The *great seal* disappointed us, but we have Lady Bathurst, Lady Catharine Apsley, Dr. Kennicott, the Hebrew professor of Oxford, his wife,† a very agreeable woman (though she copies Hebrew), besides the Garricks, and two or three other very clever people. We live with the utmost freedom and ease imaginable, walking all together, or in small parties, chatting, reading, or scribbling, just as we like. We are now come to town on business. I shall set out for Bristol on Friday.

At this visit to Mr. Wilmot, a friendship commenced between Hannah More and every individual of the party, which lasted during their respective lives. She returned to Bristol in August, 1777, after an absence of five months, and about this time received the following letters from Mr. Garrick.

Mr. Garrick to Miss H. More.

My dear Nine,

We have been upon the ramble for near three weeks, and your ode did not reach me till Monday last. Good, and very good—partial, and very partial. Mrs. Garrick (who sends her best wishes) and her lord and master set out for Bath the beginning of next month. Though my doctors have extorted a vow from me that I shall neither dine out nor give dinners while I stay at Bath, yet I had a mental reservation with regard to Bristol. However, if I continue sick and peevish, I had better keep my ill-humours at home, and for my wife alone. She is bound to them, and so reconciled to them by long use that she can go to sleep in the midst of a good scolding, as a good sailor can while the guns are firing.

Mrs. Garrick is studying your two acts. We shall bring them with us, and she will criticise you to the bone. A Ger-

* An appellation he generally gave her.

† It should be here mentioned to her honour, that she took the trouble of acquiring this language for the entire purpose of qualifying herself for correcting the press of her husband's great work.

man commentator (Montaigne says) will suck an author dry. She is resolved to dry you up to a slender shape, and has all her wits at work upon you.

I am really tired—my thumb is guilty, but my heart is free. I could write till midnight, but if I don't finish directly, I shall be obliged, from pain, to stop short at what I have most pleasure in declaring, that I am, please your Nineship,

Most truly yours,

D. GARRICK.

Have you kindly excused me to Dr. Stonehouse? My friend Walker intends trying his lecturing acumen upon you very soon. Why should not I come one day, and kill two birds with one stone?

From the same to the same.

Broadlands, 1777.

MY DEAR NINE,

I have been half-dead, and thought I should never see you more. I took care of your property, and have shown my love to you by a trifling legacy—but that is at present deferred; and if our friendship is like that of some other persons, we may, in a little time, smile and shake hands, and backbite each other as genteelly as the best of them. *Sat sapienti.*

I am at the sweet seat of Lord Palmerston, called *Broadlands*, near Romsey, in Hampshire, and again growing fat, and overflowing with spirits. I was really so ill that I could not write a letter but with pain. I am not suffered to write or read; therefore I am now pleasing myself by stealth.

Your friend the Dean of Gloucester has most kindly sent me his book against Locke and his followers. I have read it with care, and like it, some few trifling matters excepted; but I cannot be conceited enough to make my objections in the margin of his book. What shall I do? You are, I suppose, in the same predicament.

If you will read the last Monthly Review, you will see an article upon the *Wreath of Fashion*, which has been much approved; and, what is more surprising, has revived the sale of the poem very briskly. A word in your ear—but be secret for your life—I wrote it.

From same to same.

Enclosed you have the "Blackbird and Nightingale." I am afraid it will not please you so much upon paper as from my tongue. I must desire you to mark what is amiss in it, and speak freely to me as to your thinking about its errors. Baretti has printed a volume in octavo against Voltaire, and hath, I believe, sent it to me, for I found a copy upon my table. If

it is done well I shall rejoice; if ill, the cause will be much hurt by a weak defender.

I hope you will consider your dramatic matter with all your wit and feeling. Let your fifth act be worthy of you, and tear the heart to pieces, or wo betide you! I shall not pass over any scenes or parts of scenes that are merely written to make up a certain number of lines. Such doings, Madame Nine, will neither do for you nor for me.

Most affectionately yours,

Upon the gallop,

My wife sends her love. D. GARRICK.

From same to same.

Essex, July 9, 1777.

MY DEAREST OF HANNAHS,

You must have thought me lost, mad, or dead, that I have not sent you a morsel of affection for some time. I have an excuse, if there can be any for the neglect of such a friend! We are now with Mr. Rigby* and some ladies, our particular friends, by the sea-side; and while I am writing this in my dressing-room, I see no less than fifty vessels under sail, and one, half an hour ago, saluted us with thirteen guns. Among all the news, foreign and domestic, that travel through and about Bristol, have you not yet heard that *Mrs. Garrick and I were separated?* Tell the truth, dear Nine, and shame you know whom. To our very great surprise, a great friend of ours came from London; and to his greater surprise, found us laughing over our tea under our walnut-tree: he took me aside, and told me it was all over the town, from Hyde Park corner to Whitechapel dunghill, that I had parted with Mrs. Garrick. You may easily suppose this was great matter of mirth to us. We imagined somebody had had a mind to joke with our friend, but upon inquiry we found that such a report had been spread; but, to comfort your heart, be assured that we are still as much united as ever, and are both so well, that there is a prospect of dragging on our clogs for some years to come. Colman is preparing his comedy, of four acts, called the "*Suicide*," a very dangerous subject, but the actors say it must have great success.

My theatrical curiosity diminishes daily, and my vanity, as an author, is quite extinct; though, by-the-by, I have written a copy of verses to Mr. Baldwin, the member for Shropshire, upon his attack upon me in the House of Commons. He complained that a celebrated gentleman was admitted into the house when everybody else was excluded, and *that I gloried in my situation.* Upon these last words my muse has taken flight, and with success. I have described the different

* The Right Honourable Richard Rigby.

speakers, and, it is said, well, and strong, and true. I read them to Lord North, Lord Gower, Lord Weymouth, Mr. Rigby, &c., and they were all pleased. If I have time before I am obliged to send away this long letter, you shall have the first copy, though you must take care not to suffer them to go from your own hands. I have, upon my word, given them to nobody. Burke and Mr. Townshend behaved nobly upon the occasion. The whole house groaned at poor Baldwin, who is reckoned, *par excellence*, the dullest man in it; and a question was going to be put, to give me an exclusive privilege to go in whenever I pleased. In short, I am a much greater man than I thought.

Whenever I receive your story, I shall con it over most unmercifully. My wife this moment tells me that I must send you a double portion of her love; and she has added, that if the vinegar is but half as sharp as your pen, or as your temper is sweet, she shall be most thankful for it. There is German wit for you. I shall deliver the overflowings of your heart to her in all the purity of affection. We are going to Lady Spencer's, for ten days, in half an hour. Our loves to all about you.

Most affectionately and
faithfully yours,
D. GARRICK.

From same to same.

Adelphi, Oct. 17, 1777.

Shame! shame! shame!

You may well say so, my dear madam; but indeed I have been so disagreeably entertained with the gout running all about me, from head to heel, that I have been unfit for the duties of friendship, and very often for those which a good husband, and a good friend, should never fail performing. I must gallop over this small piece of paper: it was the first I snatched up, to tell you that my wife has your letter, and thinks it a fine one and a sweet one.

I was at court to-day, and such work they made with me, from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Page of the Back Stairs, that I have been suffocated with compliments. We have wanted you at some of our private hours. Where's the Nine? we want the Nine! Silent was every muse.

Cambridge said yesterday, in a large company at the Bishop of Durham's, where I dined, that your ode to my house-dog was a very witty production; and he thought there was nothing to be altered or amended except in the last stanza, which he thought the only weak one. I am afraid that you asked me to do something for you about the parliament, which, in my multitude of matters, was overlooked; pray, if it is of conse-

quence, let me know it again, and you may be assured of the intelligence you want.

The last new tragedy, "*Semiramis*," has, though a bare translation, met with great success. The prologue is a bad one, as you may read in the papers by the author; the epilogue is grave, but a sweet pretty elegant morsel, by Mr. Sheridan; it had deservedly great success. Mr. Mason's Caractacus is not crowded, but the men of taste, and classical men, admire it much. Mrs. Garrick sends a large parcel of love to you all. I send mine in the same bundle. Pray write soon, and forgive me all my delinquencies. I really have not time to read over my scrawl, so pray decipher her, and excuse me,

Ever yours, most affectionately,

D. GARRICK.

CHAPTER IV.

WE find Hannah More again in London in the November of the same year, 1777. Her tragedy of Percy had been accepted by Mr. Harris of Covent Garden, and was to be brought out without delay.

On her arrival in town, she thus writes to her sister, from her lodgings in Gerrard-street.

1777.

I believe I shall go to Hampton to-morrow, to stay two or three days. They insist upon it, and I think it will be of service to me, if it be only to keep me quiet for a few days. Mrs. Garrick says I shall have my own comfortable room, with a good fire, and "with all the lozenges and all the wheys in the world." You may be sure this was her own expression. Mr. Garrick was at the chancellor's this morning. It is impossible to show more friendly anxiety than both *he* and Lady Bathurst do for the success of Percy. The play seldom comes into my head unless it be mentioned. I am at present very tranquil about it. The town is rather empty, but who's afraid?

Gerrard-street, 1777.

It is impossible to tell you of all the kindness and friendship of the Garricks; he thinks of nothing, talks of nothing, writes of nothing but Percy. He is too sanguine; it will have a fall, and so I tell him. When Garrick had finished his prologue and epilogue (which are excellent), he desired I would pay him. Dryden, he said, used to have five guineas apiece, but as he was a richer man he would be content if I would treat

him with a handsome supper and a bottle of claret. We haggled sadly about the price, I insisting that I could only afford to give him a beefsteak and a pot of porter; and at about twelve we sat down to some toast and honey, with which the temperate bard contented himself. Several very great ones made interest to hear Garrick read the play, which he peremptorily refused. I supped on Wednesday night at Sir Joshua's; spent yesterday morning at the chancellor's, and the evening at Mrs. Boscawen's, Lady Bathurst being of the party.

What dreadful news from America! we are a disgraced, undone nation. What a sad time to bring out a play in! when, if the country had the least spark of virtue remaining, not a creature would think of going to it. But the levity of the times will, on this occasion, be of some service to me.

Mr. Garrick's study, Adelphi, ten at night.

He himself puts the pen into my hand, and bids me say that all is just as it should be. Nothing was ever more warmly received. I went with Mr. and Mrs. Garrick; sat in Mr. Harris's box, in a snug, dark corner, and behaved very well, that is, very quietly. The prologue and epilogue were received with bursts of applause; so indeed was the whole; as much beyond my expectation as my deserts! Mr. Garrick's kindness has been unceasing.

Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

DEAR MADAM,

No one can more sincerely rejoice in the triumph of last night than myself, unless some friend, equally affectionate, was of a disposition so timid as to doubt of your success, which I never did for one moment. I thought the divine Muses would be more than a match for the infernal powers, and though Cerberus showed a disposition to bark, and the hydra to hiss, the one would only prove himself an ill-natured cur, the other a silly goose—their clamours were all drowned in the universal plaudit.

I have had such a pain in my face as has obliged me to be muffled up for these six weeks, but I am getting better, and have sent to the box-keeper for boxes for your third and sixth night, and hope also to attend the ninth, though I dare not make so distant an engagement with precarious health.

In any situation I could not flatter myself with being of use as a critic; you had Mr. Garrick, who feels so truly, as renders criticism needless, and who has also the critical art in such perfection, that he would be the best judge if he had no feeling.

I have only to wish you health to wear your bays with pleasure, and that you may ever be as you have been, the pride of

your friends and the humiliation of your enemies. With great esteem I am, dear madam,

Your most affectionate and
obliged humble servant,
ELIZABETH MONTAGU.

H. More to her sister.

Gerrard-street, 1777.

I may now venture to tell you (as you extorted a promise from me to conceal nothing) what I would not hazard last night,—that the reception of Percy exceeded my most sanguine wishes. I am just returned from the second night, and it was, if possible, received more favourably than on the first. One tear is worth a thousand hands, and I had the satisfaction to see even the men shed them in abundance.

The critics (as is usual) met at the Bedford last night, to fix the character of the play. If I were a heroine of romance, and was writing to my confidante, I should tell you all the fine things that were said; but as I am a real living Christian woman, I do not think it would have been so modest. I will only say, as Garrick does, that I have had so much flattery, that I might, if I would, choke myself in my own pap.

Northumberland House, Dec. 29, 1777.

Dr. Percy* waits on Miss More with his best thanks for her most invaluable present of Percy, corrected, &c. with her own hand, which he shall ever highly value, and keep as a pledge of friendship. He should not have delayed returning his sincere acknowledgments so long, but he has been for many days past wholly engaged in regulating and dispensing the duke's annual charity to many hundreds of poor.

Gerrard-street, 1777.

Yesterday morning Dr. Percy was announced to me. When he came in he told me he was sent by the Duke of Northumberland and Earl Percy to congratulate me on my great success; to inform me of the general approbation, and to thank me in their names for the honour I had done them. That the duke and my lord were under much concern at not being able to attend the play; both father and son having the gout. They sent, however, each for a ticket, for which they paid as became the blood of the Percys; and in so genteel and respectful a manner, that it was impossible for the nicest pride to take umbrage at it.

I am more flattered with the honour this noble family have done me, because I did not solicit their attention, nor would I even renew my acquaintance with Dr. Percy on coming to

* Bishop of Dromore.

town, lest it should look like courting the notice of his patrons. *Je suis un peu fiere.*

They are playing *Percy* at this moment for the seventh time; I never think of going. It is very odd, but it does not amuse me. I had a very brilliant house last night. It is strange, but I hear Lord Lyttleton* has been every night since the play came out. I do not deserve it, for I always abuse him. I have the great good fortune to have the whole town warm in my favour, and the writers too, except —— and ——; these two are very ill of the yellow jaundice—weak men, to be disturbed at so feeble an enemy! Rival I am not to either of them, or to anybody else; for the idea of competition never entered my head. But these two, looking on themselves as the greatest tragic writers of the age, consider me as the usurper of their rights. Hoole and Mason are much more generous: the reason, I suppose, is, they are better poets. The Duke of Northumberland has sent to thank me for a copy of the play. My lord bid Dr. Percy tell me it was impossible to express how exactly I had pleased him in the manner of wording the inscription.

Last night was the ninth night of Percy. It was a very brilliant house; and *I* was there. Lady North did me the honour to take a stage-box. I trembled when the speech against the wickedness of going to war was spoken, as I was afraid my lord was in the house, and that speech, though not written with any particular design, is so bold, and always so warmly received, that it frightens me, and I really feel uneasy till it is well over. Mrs. Montagu had a box again; which, as she is so consummate a critic, and is hardly ever seen at a public place, is a great credit to the play. Lady B. was there of course; and I am told she has not made an engagement this fortnight, but on condition she should be at liberty to break it for Percy. I was asked to dine at the chancellor's two or three days ago, but happened to be engaged to Mrs. Montagu, with whom I have been a good deal lately. We also spent an agreeable evening together at Dr. Cadogan's, where she and I, being the only two monsters in the creation who never touch a card (and laughed at enough for it we are), had the fireside to ourselves; and a more elegant and instructive conversation I have seldom enjoyed. I met Mrs. Chapone one day at Mrs. Montagu's; she is one of Percy's warmest admirers; and as she does not go to plays, but has formed her judgment in the closet, it is the more flattering. I have been out very little except to particular friends. I believe it was a false delicacy, but I could not go to anybody's house, for fear they should think I came to be praised or to hear the play talked of.

* Son of the first Lord Lyttleton.

Gerrard-street, 1777.

I am at this moment as quiet as my heart can wish, and quietness is my definition of happiness. I had no less than five invitations to dine abroad to-day, but preferred the precious and rare luxury of solitude. I was much diverted at the play the other night, when Douglas tears the letter which he had intercepted, an honest man in the shilling gallery, vexed it had fallen into the husband's hands instead of the lover's, called out, "Do pray send the letter to Mr. Percy." I think some of you might contrive to make a little jaunt, if it were only for one night, and see the *bantling*. Adieu, and some of you come.

The sisters complied with this invitation, and here follows an extract from one of their letters.

January, 1778.

Just returned from Percy, the theatre overflowed prodigiously, notwithstanding their majesties and the School for Scandal at the other house. Yes; we did overflow, the twelfth night! On entering the parlour, where Hannah was sitting alone, our eyes were greeted with the sight of a wreath, composed of a Roman laurel, ingeniously interwoven, and the stems confined within an elegant ring. From whence, you will ask, could such a fanciful thought proceed? I answer, from Mrs. Boscawen. It originated at Glanvilla, where the wreath was made. The letter which accompanied it was an elegant morceau.

I enclose our sister's *poetical* acknowledgment of this piece of gallanterie.

TO THE HONOURABLE MRS. BOSCAWEN.

The laurel, fostered by your hand,
With *me* will never grow;
The beauteous wreath your fingers twined
Would wither on *my* brow.

Apollo, who his Daphne seeks
Transformed to this fair tree,
Would frown to see his darling plant
Thus ornamenting *me*.

But when I told the angry power
You placed it on my brow,
"Yes; 'tis my darling plant," he cried,
"Full well I know it now.

"But give it back, presumptuous maid,
Restore my fav'rite tree,
Let her who gave it thee receive
This precious boon from me.

"Tell her to guard my sacred plant
From every chilly blast,
To crown her heroes yet to come,
To crown her heroes past.

"Nor let her fear, to those she loves,
To give this boon away;
For her the faithful *myrtle blooms*,
For her the sage's bay.

"And even those shall claim a name,
And challenge some renown;
Boscawen's friendship is thy fame,
Her praise thy LAUREL CROWN."

Friday, a card from Lady —— to engage Hannah to dine with her on Sunday, which she, being of the *Christian* faction, declined. Yesterday, when we were all seated in the drawing-room in the Adelphi, a gentleman was announced by the name of Home (author of the tragedy of Douglas). Mr. Garrick took Hannah by the hand, and approaching the stranger said, he begged leave to introduce the *Percy* to the *Douglas;* upon which, Mr. Home expressed his desire that the alliance might be again renewed; and all the company with pleasure took notice, it was the Douglas that first sued to the Percy.

Mrs. Garrick tells us that when they were at Althorp, Mr. Garrick read Percy to all the party at Lord Spencer's. Though the first edition of the play was near four thousand, and it has only been printed a fortnight, Cadell yesterday sent for a corrected copy, in order to forward the second edition as fast as possible.

Hannah resumes the correspondence.

1778.

Yesterday I dined at Sir Joshua's. Just as they were beginning to offer their nightly sacrifice to their idol Loo, I took it into my head to go and see Mrs. Barry in the mad scene in the last act of Percy, in which she is so very fine, that though it is my own nonsense, I always see that scene with pleasure. I called on a lady, not choosing to go alone, and we got into the front boxes. On opening the door, I was a little hurt to see a very indifferent house. I looked on the stage, and saw the scene was the inside of a prison, and that the heroine, who was then speaking, had on a linen gown. I was quite stunned, and really thought I had lost my senses, when a smart man, in regimentals, began to sing, "How happy could I be with either." I stared and rubbed my eyes, thinking I was in a dream; for all this while I was such a dunce that I never discovered that they were acting the "Beggar's Opera." At length, upon inquiry, I found that Lewis had been taken extremely ill, and that handbills had been distributed to announce

another play. Many sober personages shook their heads at me, as much as to say—How finely we are caught. Among these were Mr. D——, the prebendary, who came under the same mistake: in another box was Dr. Percy, who, I vainly thought, looked rather glum. But the best of all was Sir William Ashurst, who sat in a side box, and was perhaps one of the first judges who ever figured away at the "Beggar's Opera," that strong and bitter satire against the professions, and particularly his.

Monday night, 1778.

At the latter part of this evening Mr. Home came in; I was quite hurt to see him. He is a worthy gentlemanlike man. He congratulated me on my success, and said Alfred* had not hurt me much. There was no replying to this: so I said nothing; condolence would have been insult. Tuesday I dined at Mr. Wilmot's with an agreeable party. When I came home I found an invitation to dine the following day at Sir Joshua's, and in the Adelphi. I could accept of neither, being pre-engaged to dine with Mrs. Delany. Our party, like our dinner, was small, excellent, and well chosen. It consisted only of Mrs. Delany, Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Chapone, and one very agreeable man. The Duchess of Portland, and all Mrs. Delany's chosen friends, were appointed for the evening. I dined yesterday at Garrick's, with the sour-crout† party. Lady Bathurst came to see me yesterday before I was up: 'tis well I was ill, or I should have had a fine trimming, for she makes breakfast for the chancellor every day before nine, during the whole winter. She is very angry that I go to see her so seldom. I am not sorry that if I do affront my friends, it is generally in this way; but I always think people will like me the less the more they see me.

Mrs. Garrick came to me this morning, and wished me to go to the Adelphi, which I declined, being so ill. She would have gone herself to fetch me a physician, and insisted upon sending me my dinner, which I refused: but at six this evening, when Garrick came to the Turk's Head to dine, there accompanied him, in the coach, a minced chicken in the stew-pan, hot, a canister of her fine tea, and a pot of cream. Were there ever such people! Tell it not in Epic, or in Lyric, that the great Roscius rode with a stew-pan of minced meat with him in the coach for my dinner. Percy is acted again this evening: do any of you choose to go? I can write you an order: for my own part, I shall enjoy a much superior pleasure—that of sitting by the fire, in a great chair, and being denied to all company: what is Percy to this?

* This tragedy was brought out before Percy, and lived only four nights.

† This was a meeting of learned men once a week, at a dinner in which sour-crout always made a dish; and to this dinner Hannah More was always invited.

Well, if you do not desire I should write you an order, I will write something that will give some pleasure to your sisterly vanity. A friend has just sent me a letter she received from Mrs. Clive, from which here follows an extract. "I suppose you have heard of the uncommon success Miss More's play has met with, indeed, very deservedly. I have not seen it, but have read it: it is delightful, natural, and affecting, and by much the best modern tragedy that has been acted in my time, which you know is a pretty while ago. As you are acquainted with her family, I know you will be pleased with her success. Mr. Garrick had the conducting it, and you know whatever he touches turns to gold."

My friends have been so excessively kind to me in my little illness, that it was worth suffering some pain (though perhaps not quite so much) to try them. The Garricks have been to see me every morning. The other day he told me he was in a violent hurry—that he had been to order his own and Mrs. Garrick's mourning—had just settled every thing with the undertaker, and called for a moment to take a few hints for my epitaph. I told him he was too late, as I had disposed of the employment, a few days before, to Dr. Johnson: but as I thought *he* (Garrick) would praise me most, I should be glad to change; as to hints, I told him I had only one to give; which was to romance as much as he could, and make the character as fine as possible.

From Mr. Mackenzie to Miss H. More.

Edinburgh, Oct. 12, 1778.

MADAM,

I don't know whether I am entitled to continue our correspondence—it is certain I am unwilling to lose it; and I should have much sooner answered yours of a date so distant as the 18th of July, had I not, ever since the receipt of it, been wandering over the Highlands of Scotland, my ideas as unsettled as my residence. When I returned home, I found a good deal of business in arrear; your letter was among other papers. We generally find time soonest to do what we like to do, so I take the earliest opportunity of making a return to it.

We are perfectly agreed about the *pleasure* of the *pains* of sensibility; I may therefore say, without trespassing against the accuracy of a compliment, that I am proud of having had it in my power to confer that pleasure on you; but you are less in my debt than you imagine; though a man, and a man of business, I too can shed tears and feel the luxury of shedding them; your *Percy* has cleared scores between us in that respect.

I will not say to yourself what I think of that tragedy. Before I knew any thing of its author but the name, I could not resist the desire I felt of giving my warmest suffrage in its favour, to somebody who had an interest in it; so, for want of a

nearer relation, I communicated my sentiments to Mr. Cadell. Perhaps, however, either from his knowledge of your modesty, or of the insignificance of my opinion, he never informed you of my thoughts of it. They were indeed of no importance; but the public judged as I did, and made amends for their applause of some other plays, by that which they bestowed on Percy.

Do write again, that they may once more be in the right, and (since you wish to break my heart) that I may have another opportunity of fooling at a tragedy. To some late ones I can just reverse the answer given to Romeo—"Good Coz, I had rather weep." I will also take comfort, and hope, at some future period, to have the pleasure of paying you my respects at Bristol, though at present I have no prospect of being again in that quarter. I shall not be in the neighbourhood a second time without availing myself of your very obliging invitation.

I beg my best compliments to the Misses Erskine when you see them. I wish them to know the remembrance I entertain of the civilities I received from them at Bath.

I am, madam,
With much respect and regard,
Your most obedient servant,
HENRY MACKENZIE.

H. More to her sister.

London, 1778.

To-morrow I go to Hampton. I dread catching cold, as I have not ventured down stairs; the doctor violently opposes my going, as he has the most exalted opinion of my indiscretion. Mrs. Garrick and he battled an hour about the propriety of it. As he found we were both secretly resolved, he made a virtue of necessity, and gave the leave we were determined to take. He told us he expected I should be brought back half-dead with feasting, and indolence, and luxury, and imprudence; but at last he consented on condition that I should be well furred and flannelled, live maigre, and drink no wine.

We have been here a week; Mrs. Sheridan is with us, and her husband comes down on evenings. I find I have mistaken this lady; she is unaffected and sensible; converses and reads extremely well, and writes prettily. To be sure there may be wiser parties in the world than ours, but I question if there is one more cheerful. Ought one to own it, that the great English Roscius, and the best English dramatic poet (to say nothing of the ladies, who set up for something too), that these great geniuses, I say, sit up till midnight, playing at cross-purposes, crooked answers, and what's my thought like? yet it is true you never heard a set of wits utter half so much nonsense!

I dined to-day in the Adelphi; we were very comfortable. Garrick read a good deal, and would insist upon my reading a poem, which I told him I would not do to prevent a French war. Saturday, Lady Juliana Penn spent the afternoon with me: I like her much; she bears her misfortunes (the loss of the government of a vast province, and twenty thousand a-year) with the constancy of a great mind.

I was last night in some fine company. One lady asked what was the newest colours; the other answered that the most truly fashionable silk was a soupçon de vert, lined with a *soupir etouffeé et bradée de l'esperance:* now you must not consult your old-fashioned dictionary for the word *esperance*, for you will there find that it means nothing but hope, whereas esperance in the new language of the times means rose-buds. I dined the other day at Mrs. Leveson's, and spent the afternoon at Mrs. Boscawen's with the Duchess of Beaufort.

As you love to see all my nonsense, I enclose a few lines I sent to Mrs. Boscawen the other day with a little bottle of otto of roses.

Too gross are my senses, too vulgar my nose is,
For perfume of jasmine or essence of roses;
To you 'tis more suited, whose organs, I find,
Partake the refinement that graces your mind.

Had the phial, dear madam, I now send to you,
Been the phial which held the Diable Boiteux,
The spirit in prison no more would complain,
Nor solicit the scholar to free him again.

When laid on your toilet, and kept in your sight,
How mortals would envy the fate of the sprite,
Not a soul but would wish of his place to make trial,
And each beau would be cramming himself in a phial.

And why not in this? for deep chymists, 'tis said,
Can draw forth a spirit from feathers or lead—
Nay, from butterflies too; and how do we know,
But this essence of scents is a liquified beau?

From Mrs. Boscawen to Mrs. More.

January 1, 1778.

I send you, dear madam, the enclosed from Mr. Berenger to me.

To the Honourable Mrs. Boscawen.

I return you the tragedy of Percy with as many thanks as I can give for the pleasure of being permitted to read it. I must not talk like a French critic or a reviewer, of plot, sentiment, language, character, and all that Bayes talks about; but I will call it a meritorious and capital performance, in which there is

none of the *feather*, but all the *point* and *force* of the pen. When you see the fair author, crown her, cover her, hide her with laurels; and when I see her I will scatter flowers before her.

Adieu, my dear madam, adieu.

R. BERENGER.

I suppose Madam More will round off another *wonder of five acts* before she wets her lips in my tea-cup; which, at least, is as inspiring as the cold Castalian springs. Had she been here yesterday, she would have met "the god of her idolatry"—Earl Percy—but as she would not come—"Earl Percy took his way."

BERENGER.

From the Honourable Mrs. Boscawen.

I wish you a happy new-year, my dear madam, a more glorious one you can hardly achieve; but glory is one thing, and happiness is another. *Je vous souhaite toutes les deux pour bien des anneés.*

Here is Mr. Berenger's flowery wreath most complete, I think; when shall I carry you to put it on—shall it be Tuesday next? I have no day to offer you sooner,

Though always very much yours,

F. B.

Miss H. More to Mrs. Gwatkin.

Hampton, March 5th, 1778.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Any apology in the world that ingenuity could invent I should blush to make to you, for my long and seemingly inexcusable silence; but I am sure that when you are convinced it has proceeded from no other cause than illness, you will both pity and forgive me. I have been laid up for a whole month with a most tedious and painful rheumatism in my face—a disorder quite new to me, and which not only robs me of ease by day and sleep by night, but also makes reading and writing painful to me. I have kept my room for three weeks, and Dr. Cadogan has attended me every day. My good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Garrick have brought me here for a week, to try the effect of this salutary air, whose benefit I have so often felt before; but perhaps the beneficial influences of the agreeable company are sometimes mistaken for those of the air. As yet I am not better, and do not stir out of doors. If I were out of pain, nothing could be more to my taste than our manner of living here. The Sheridans are of our party, and contribute to embellish it.

I am very much pleased to find that *Percy* meets with your

approbation. It has been extremely successful, far beyond my expectation, and more so than any *tragedy* has been for many years. The profits were not so great as they would have been, had it been brought out when the town was full; yet they were such as I have no reason to complain of. The author's nights, sale of the copy, &c. amounted to near six hundred pounds (this is *entre nous*); and as my friend Mr. Garrick has been so good as to lay it out for me on the best security, and at five per cent., it makes a decent little addition to my small income. Cadell gave 150*l.*,—a very handsome price, with conditional promises. He confesses (a thing not usual) that it has had a very great sale, and that he shall get a good deal of money by it. The first impression was near four thousand, and the second is almost sold. I do not wish to rise on anybody's fall; but it has happened rather luckily for Percy that so many unsuccessful tragedies were brought out this winter. The Roman Sacrifice came to nothing at all; the author did not even print it. Mr. Home's tragedy of Alfred ran but three nights, for which I was sorry, as the author is an agreeable, worthy man; and even the great and mighty —— —— is in the utmost contempt, and, after the first night, was always played to deplorable houses, to the no small mortification of the conceited and envious author. The School for Scandal continues to run with its usual spirit, and is as much the favourite of the town as ever. Fielding's comedy of the Good-natured Man, which was lost for so many years, is not yet brought out, nor do I think it will this season, as the benefits and oratorios are begun.

I thank you for the desire you express to see me at Paris. I must not indulge such a wish. I should be most happy to see you, but I believe it must be on English ground. Mr. Gwatkin (with whom I went to see Percy) told me your desire to possess so worthless a thing as my picture. Nothing but your great partiality for me could make you think it worth having. Be that as it will, I shall most readily obey you by sitting to Gardiner before I leave town, if my health will give me leave, for I should be sorry you saw my resemblance at present, so muffled and frightful as I am. I did propose leaving town the last week in February, but this illness has been a sad baulk to me, as I had, unluckily, a most desirable engagement for every day, not one of which I could accept. I received your last favour from Mr. Edward, for which I heartily thank you, as well as for the verses. I should like prodigiously to have a peep at Voltaire. You say nothing of the diversions of Paris. How do you like the Comedie?

Adieu, my dear madam. Believe me, truly your ever obliged and faithful

H. More.

To the same.

August 9, 1778.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I received your favour on Saturday, and though I could not but be infinitely *concerned* at the melancholy cause of your sudden departure, yet I cannot say I was in the least *surprised* at it, as it is easy to imagine what effects the dangerous state of a deservedly beloved child must have on a heart so exquisitely alive to all the maternal feelings. What a journey of hurry, anxiety, and fatigue you must have had! I hope you did not undertake it alone. I am very impatient to learn how you found Master Gwatkin, and what his medical friends think of him. I rejoice that he is in such good hands; if there is efficacy in human art, I doubt not of his recovery, having been myself so many times snatched from the devouring jaws of death by the friendly assistance he now receives. God grant it may be as beneficial to him!

I wrote to you, madam, last Friday, not knowing of your migration. I hope they will not send you up the letter, as it is of no consequence now, containing only the particulars relative to my dear little friend, of which you have now so much better information. When your letter was brought, I was upon a visit in the neighbourhood, where it was sent me. There were ten ladies and a clergyman. I was pleased with the assemblage, thinking the vanity of the *sex* would meet with its equilibrium in the wisdom of the *profession;* that the brilliant sallies of female wit and sprightliness would be corrected and moderated by the learned gravity and judicious conversation of the Rev. Theologue. I looked upon the latter as the centripetal, acting against the centrifugal force of the former, who would be kept within their orbit of decorum by his means. For about an hour nothing was uttered but *words*, which are almost an equivalent to nothing. The gentleman had not yet spoken. The *ladies*, with loud vociferation, seemed to *talk* much without *thinking* at all. The gentleman, with all the male stupidity of silent recollection, without saying a single syllable, seemed to be acting over the pantomime of thought. I cannot say indeed his countenance so much belied his understanding as to express any thing: no, let me not do him that injustice; he might have sat for the picture of insensibility. I endured his taciturnity, thinking that the longer he was in collecting, adjusting, and arranging his ideas, the more would he charm me with the tide of oratorical eloquence, when the materials of his conversation were ready for display: but, alas! it never occurred that I had seen an *empty* bottle corked as well as a *full* one. After sitting another hour, I thought I perceived in him signs of pregnant sentiment, which was just on the point of being delivered in speech. I was extremely

exhilarated at this, but it was a false alarm: he essayed it not; at length the imprisoned powers of rhetoric burst through the shallow mounds of torpid silence and reserve, and he remarked, with equal acuteness of wit, novelty of invention, and depth of penetration, that—"we had had no summer." Then, shocked at his own loquacity, he double-locked the door of his lips, "*and word spoke never more.*"

Will you not say I am turning devotee when I tell you what my amusements of the reading kind are? I have read through all the epistles three times since I have been here,—the ordinary translation, Locke's Paraphrase, and a third put into very elegant English (I know not by whom), in which St Paul's obscurities are elucidated, and Harwood's pomp of words avoided. I am also reading "West on the Resurrection;" in my poor judgment a most excellent thing, calculated to confound all the cavils of the infidel, and to confirm all the hopes of the believer. Have you heard from the sweet little Cornwallian since you left her? My most affectionate regards to my dear Master Lovell, and earnest wishes for his speedy recovery.

I am, my dear madam,
With the most perfect esteem,
Your ever obliged and affectionate
humble servant,
H. More.

We find the following verses enclosed in one of the letters to Mrs. Gwatkin.

AN IMITATION FROM THE SPANISH.

Thrice happy he whose lowly lot
Is fixed in his paternal cot,
Remote from strife and state;
Content he cultivates the glade,
Inhales the breeze, enjoys the shade,
And loves his humble fate.

His eyes no anxious vigils keep,
No dreams of gold distract his sleep,
And lead his heart astray:
Nor blasting envy's tainted gale
Pollutes the pleasures of the vale,
To vex his harmless day.

The tower that rears its front on high,
And bids defiance to the sky,
Provokes the angry winds;
The branching oak, extending wide,
Invites destruction by its pride,
And courts the fall it finds.

Nor lightning's blast nor wind destroys
The safer bliss, the humbler joys,
That crown my peaceful cot;
There hallowed quietude resorts,
And wonders men can covet courts,
And bids me bless my lot.

Ah! sacred leisure—guest divine!
Thy meek delights be ever mine,
Fair, permanent, and pure;
Chaste Nymph, who taught my erring youth,
This dear, this necessary truth,
"Be humble and secure."

From H. More to one of her sisters.

London, 1778.

I dined with the Garricks on Thursday; he went with me in the evening, intending only to set me down at Sir Joshua's, where I was engaged to pass the evening. I was not a little proud to be the means of bringing such a beau into such a party. We found Gibbon, Johnson, Hermes Harris, Burney, Chambers, Ramsey, the Bishop of St. Asaph, Boswell, Langton, &c.; and scarce an expletive man or woman among them. Garrick put Johnson into such good spirits that I never knew him so entertaining or more instructive. He was as brilliant as himself, and as good-humoured as any one else.

Yesterday I dined with Captain and Mrs. Middleton; and Mrs. Bouverie, good Jonas Hanway, the Bishop of Chester* and his lady, were of the party. I had only been in the company of the bishop once, and that was two years ago. I left them earlier than I wished, though not till near nine, being engaged to spend the evening at the Burrows's, to meet Lady Juliana Penn and Dr. Price.

We have been high in debate to-night, which kept us up beyond our usual sober hour. Sheridan has dared to censure Shakspeare,—I have raved and scolded, and Garrick did every thing but beat him.

Hannah More returned to Bristol in April, 1778, after another five months' absence; and immediately on the death of Mr. Garrick, which happened on the 20th of January, 1779, she again set out for London at the express desire of Mrs. Garrick, whose melancholy summons she rose from the bed of sickness to attend.

Adelphi, Jan. 1779.

From Dr. Cadogan's, I intended to have gone to the Adelphi, but found that Mrs. Garrick was that moment quitting her house, while preparations were making for the last sad ceremony; she very wisely fixed on a private friend's house for this purpose, where she could be at her ease. I got there just before her; she was prepared for meeting me; she ran into my arms, and we both remained silent for some minutes; at last she whispered, "I have this moment embraced his coffin, and you come next." She soon recovered herself, and said with great composure, "The goodness of God to me is inexpressible;

* Bishop Porteus, afterward Bishop of London.

I desired to die, but it is his will that I should live, and he has convinced me he will not let my life be quite miserable, for he gives astonishing strength to my body, and *grace* to my heart; neither do I deserve, but I am thankful for both." She thanked me a thousand times for such a real act of friendship, and bade me be comforted, for it was God's will. She told me they had just returned from Althorp, Lord Spencer's, where he had been reluctantly dragged, for he had felt unwell for some time; but during his visit he was often in such fine spirits that they could not believe he was ill. On his return home he appointed Cadogan to meet him, who ordered him an emetic, the warm bath, and the usual remedies, but with very little effect. On the Sunday he was in good spirits and free from pain; but as the suppression still continued, Dr. Cadogan became extremely alarmed, and sent for Pott, Heberden, and Schomberg, who gave him up the moment they saw him. Poor Garrick stared to see his room full of doctors, not being conscious of his real state. No change happened till the Tuesday evening, when the surgeon who was sent for to blister and bleed him, made light of his illness, assuring Mrs. Garrick that he would be well in a day or two, and insisted on her going to lie down. Towards morning she desired to be called if there was the least change. Every time that she administered the draughts to him in the night, he always squeezed her hand in a particular manner, and spoke to her with the greatest tenderness and affection. Immediately after he had taken his last medicine, he softly said, "Oh! dear," and yielded up his spirit without a groan, and in his perfect senses. His behaviour during the night was all gentleness and patience, and he frequently made apologies to those about him for the trouble he gave them.

On opening him, a stone was found that measured five inches and a half round one way, and four and a half the other, yet this was not the immediate cause of his death; his kidneys were quite gone. I paid a melancholy visit to the coffin yesterday, where I found room for meditation, till the mind "burst with thinking." His new house is not so pleasant as Hampton, nor so splendid as the Adelphi, but it is commodious enough for all the wants of its inhabitant; and besides it is so quiet that he never will be disturbed till the eternal morning, and never till then will a sweeter voice than his own be heard. May he then find mercy! They are preparing to hang the house with black, for he is to lie in state till Monday. I dislike this pageantry, and cannot help thinking that the disimbodied spirit must look with contempt upon the farce that is played over its miserable relics. But a splendid funeral could not be avoided, as he is to be laid in the Abbey with such illustrious dust, and so many are desirous of testifying their respect by attending.

I can never cease to remember with affection and gratitude

so warm, steady, and disinterested a friend; and I can most truly bear this testimony to his memory, that I never witnessed, in any family, more decorum, propriety, and regularity than in his: where I never saw a card, or even met (except in one instance) a person of his own profession at his table; of which Mrs. Garrick, by her elegance of taste, her correctness of manners, and very original turn of humour, was the brightest ornament. All his pursuits and tastes were so decidedly intellectual, that it made the society, and the conversation which was always to be found in his circle, interesting and delightful.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I beg to know how you do, and cannot forbear troubling you with my inquiries; for that a whole nation joins with you in lamenting your irreparable loss will not, I doubt, alleviate your sorrow: but oh! my dear madam, think of Mrs. Garrick's, after so long, so happy, so constant a union; for I am told they have never been separated even for a day. I cannot express how I pity her. I have sent to the house to inquire after her health, and was informed that she was as well as could be expected: but how well is that? Sometimes I have imagined that you would come up and lament with her; and I am doubtful where I direct this, but could not forbear writing to you on the greatest affliction you can have out of your own family. But you are happy, dear madam, in having provided against all the afflictions with which our pilgrimage abounds—the only true cordial—the deep sense and real power of the Christian religion. "Thy will be done," contains our lesson. I will not pretend to say more on the subject, but that I interest myself sincerely in your great loss, and am with much truth and affection,

Your faithful humble servant,
F. B.

The Burrows family, whom I have just seen, were speaking with concern of your great share in this public loss. The Bishop of Bristol and Mrs. Newton have inquired after you very kindly.

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

Hill-street, Friday morning.

DEAR MADAM,

There never was a time in which dear Mrs. Garrick's kind attention would not have made its impression, but at this time it touches my heart in a degree not possible to be expressed. My bodily illness has been slight; but for her loss, my loss, yours, the world's, my mind has been sick indeed. Talents

like Mr. Garrick's must ever excite the admiration of mankind; but possessed of so many virtues, adorned by so many graces, they are so endeared to one's affections, so ingrafted in one's esteem, that the loss can never be repaired, never be forgotten. Some consolation, however, arises from those excellences which render our loss irreparable. His untainted morals in a situation exposed to temptation, his perfect rectitude of conduct through the whole course of his life, his amiable and kind domestic behaviour, his generosity and fidelity to his relations, and his charity to the poor and distressed, will ever be remembered by the age in which he lived, and recorded to ages to come. For some days after the sad event, I contemplated only the great parts of his character, and my sorrow was deep; but I hoped time would in some degree familiarize my mind with it; but alas! so many little graces, so many pleasing qualities of it every moment present themselves to my recollection, that the grief is still new.

I heard with great satisfaction of the resignation with which dear Mrs. Garrick behaved, and doubt not but she will be supported by that great Being to whose will she submits. Never did I behold so happy a pair. I have ever admired the dignity of mind which Mrs. Garrick possessed on all occasions, and I can hardly say whether I love or esteem her most. Her patience in such deep affliction will have its reward somewhere, and at some time; but I will confess to you I live in terrors about her health. If a sympathizing heart can give her any comfort, that comfort I can bring whenever she will admit me. I can grieve with her, and hourly do I grieve for her.

Your servant went away last night without staying for an answer to your kind letter. Till I received it I did not know you were in town, or should certainly have inquired after your health on an event which I know must so greatly affect you.

If you could do me the favour to dine with me to-day, you would meet only a small party; and one of the company has lately lost a dear and valuable friend, a circumstance which at this time will, I guess by my own feelings, recommend her to you.

I am, dear madam, with great esteem,
Your most obedient humble servant,
E. MONTAGU

PART II.

FROM THE YEAR A. D. 1779 TO A. D. 1785.

CHAPTER I.

THE death of Mr. Garrick may be considered an era in the life of Hannah More. His gayety, his intelligence, and his wit, added to his admiration of her genius, and the warmth of his personal friendship for her, while in the opinion of all mankind his favour was a great privilege and distinction, formed the strongest spell that held her in subjection to the fascinations of brilliant company and a town life, in opposition to those inbred and original propensities which disposed her strongly, in the midst of these blandishments, to cultivate in retirement a better acquaintance with herself, and a better use of her great capacities. She was not a person, however, to be actuated by sudden and overpowering impulses, or to be hurried into any adoption, especially one which implied a change of principle and habit, without much consideration both of the end and the means. From the death of Garrick to her retreat to Cowslip Green, an interval of about five years, she gradually proceeded in redeeming her time, and detaching herself from engagements which, however agreeable to her taste and talents, kept her from answering the higher vocation which summoned her to the service of the soul and labours of love.

From H. More to her sister.

Adelphi, Feb. 2, 1779.

We (Miss Cadogan and myself) went to Charing-cross to see the melancholy procession. Just as we got there we received a ticket from the Bishop of Rochester to admit us into the abbey. No admittance could be obtained but under his hand. We hurried away in a hackney-coach, dreading to be too late. The bell of St. Martin's and the abbey gave a sound that smote upon my very soul. When we got to the cloisters we found multitudes striving for admittance. We gave our ticket, and were let in, but unluckily we ought to have kept it. We followed the man, who unlocked a door of iron, and

directly closed it upon us, and two or three others, and we found ourselves in a tower, with a dark winding staircase, consisting of half a hundred stone steps. When we got to the top there was no way out; we ran down again, called, and beat the door till the whole pile resounded with our cries. Here we staid half an hour in perfect agony; we were sure it would be all over; nay, we might never be let out; we might starve; we might perish. At length our clamours brought an honest man,—a guardian angel I then thought him. We implored him to take care of us, and get us into a part of the abbey whence we might see the grave. He asked for the bishop's ticket: we had given it away to the wrong person; and he was not obliged to believe we ever had one; yet he saw so much truth in our grief that, though we were most shabby, and a hundred fine people were soliciting the same favour, he took us under each arm—carried us safely through the crowd, and put us in a little gallery directly over the grave, where we could see and hear every thing as distinctly as if the abbey had been a parlour. Little things sometimes affect the mind strongly. We were no sooner recovered from the fresh burst of grief than I cast my eyes, the first thing, on Handel's monument, and read the scroll in his hand, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Just at three, the great doors burst open, with a noise that shook the roof; the organ struck up, and the whole choir, in strains only less solemn than the "archangel's trump," began Handel's fine anthem. The whole choir advanced to the grave, in hoods and surplices, singing all the way; then Sheridan, as chief mourner; then the body (alas! whose body!) with ten noblemen and gentlemen, pall-bearers; then the rest of the friends and mourners; hardly a dry eye—the very players, bred to the trade of counterfeiting, shed genuine tears.

As soon as the body was let down, the bishop began the service, which he read in a low, but solemn and devout manner. Such an awful stillness reigned, that every word was audible. How I felt it! Judge if my heart did not assent to the wish, that the soul of our dear brother now departed was in peace. And this is all of Garrick! Yet a very little while, and he shall "say to the worm, Thou art my brother; and to corruption, thou art my mother and my sister." So passes away the fashion of this world. And the very night he was buried, the playhouses were as full, and the Pantheon was as crowded, as if no such thing had happened; nay, the very mourners of the day partook of the revelries of the night;—the same night too!

As soon as the crowd was dispersed, our friend came to us with an invitation from the bishop's lady, to whom he had related our disaster, to come into the deanery. We were carried into her dressing-room, but being incapable of speech, she very kindly said she would not interrupt such sorrow, and left us; but sent up wine, cakes, and all manner of good things,

which was really well-timed. I caught no cold, notwithstanding all I went through.

On Wednesday night we came to the Adelphi,—to this house! She bore it with great tranquillity; but what was my surprise to see her go alone into the chamber and bed in which he had died that day fortnight. She had a delight in it beyond expression. I asked her the next day how she went through it? She told me very well; that she first prayed with great composure, then went and kissed the dear bed, and got into it with a sad pleasure.

Hampton, February, 1779.

We have been at this sweet, and once cheerful, place near a week. Alas! it has lost its perfume, yet it is in great beauty; the weather is fine, the verdure charming; "and could we pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow," all would appear as beautiful as it used to do.

A few very intimate friends came with us. Our first entrance was sad enough. Dragon looked as he used to do, and ran up to meet his master. Poor Mrs. Garrick went and shut herself up for half an hour. Not a sigh escapes our poor friend that she can restrain. When I expressed my surprise at her self-command, she answered, "Groans and complaints are very well for those who are to mourn but a little while, but a sorrow that is to last for life will not be violent and romantic."

We shall go to town to-morrow, when she insists on it that I shall go and see my friends.

From the same to the same.

London, 1779.

I have been to Mrs. Boscawen's, where I was a little amused by spending an hour with Lord Howe, lately returned from America. He is agreeable, and remarkably modest in speaking of himself. He said, it was a little hard, that after a man had devoted his whole time and talents (however poor the latter might be) to the service of his country, that the *event*, and not his conduct, should determine his character; that to be *unsuccessful* and *guilty* should be the same thing, and that he should be held up as a public criminal for not doing what could not be done!

Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Vesey have spent one afternoon with us; and these, with Ladies Bathurst, Edgecombe, and Spencer, are all we have seen. She is refused to everybody, but she is so circumstanced as to be much solicited on that score, for I suppose Garrick had more, what we may call particular friends, than any man in England.

My way of life is very different from what it used to be; you must not, therefore, expect much entertainment from my letters, for, as in the annals of states, so in the lives of indi-

viduals, those periods are often the safest and best which make the poorest figure. After breakfast, I go to my own apartment for several hours, where I read, write, and work; very seldom letting anybody in, though I have a room for separate visiters: but I almost look on a morning visit as an immorality. At four we dine. We have the same elegant table as usual, but I generally confine myself to one single dish of meat. I have taken to drink half a glass of wine. At six we have coffee: at eight tea, when we have, sometimes, a dowager or two of quality. At ten we have salad and fruits. Each has her book, which we read without any restraint, as if we were alone, without apologies or speech-making.

London, 1779.

Mrs. Montagu said a very sensible thing to me the other day; we were speaking of a friend of ours, who, with great sense, gives way to great violence of temper. "The ancient heathens," said she, "taught men to subdue the passions from a principle of wisdom; the Christian religion teaches it from a principle of duty; but it is no wonder that the modern fine gentlemen should be the slaves of passion, for they are neither wise heathens nor good Christians." I was asked yesterday to meet Dr. Burney and Evelina at Mrs. Reynolds's,* but was engaged at home. This Evelina is an extraordinary girl; she is not more than twenty, of a very retired disposition; and how she picked up her knowledge of nature and low life, her *Brangtons*, and her *St. Giles's* gentry, is astonishing!

I went yesterday to see Mrs. Delany; she took it very kindly, but I found her overwhelmed in sorrow, for the death of Mrs. Dashwood.† A tender friendship had subsisted between them for sixty or seventy years. While I was there, a letter and legacy from the deceased were brought in, and I felt a pleasure at finding it was possible to preserve such extreme sensibility, as poor Mrs. Delany discovered, in such very advanced old age.

Lady Bathurst and I are very friendly. Apsley House is finished, and most superbly furnished; and, which is not always the case with superb things, it is very beautiful, and teeming with patriotism, for all her glasses, hangings, and ornaments are entirely English.

Pleasure is by much the most laborious trade I know, especially for those who have not a vocation to it. I worked with great assiduity at this hard calling on Monday. The moment I had breakfasted, I went to Apsley House; there I staid till near two; I then made insignificant visits till four, when I went to Audley-street‡ to dinner, where I staid till eight, and from thence went to spend the evening at Mrs. Vesey's,

* Sir Joshua's sister, who, to avoid the fatigue of so much company as frequented her brother's, had retired about this time to a small house of her own.

† The Delia of Hammond the poet.

‡ Mrs. Boscawen's.

where there was a small assembly of about thirty people, and all clever. She keeps out dunces, because she never has cards. Mrs. Montagu and the provost of Dublin talked *most* and *best*. I was asked to meet another party the same evening, but not being able to make a polypus of myself, I did not go. And yet I had rather slave at it all day now and then, than make a single little formal dull visit every afternoon.

Encouraged by the great success of Percy, and constantly urged by Mr. Garrick to try her power once more in the same way, Hannah More had amused herself during the former year in writing another tragedy, four acts of which had been read and much approved of by him. She had completed this piece some time before his death, and now brought it with her, intending to leave it in the manager's hands during the summer, that it might appear with proper advantages the following season. Mr. Harris, however, no sooner understood that the play was in readiness, than he solicited her with so much earnestness to let him bring it out the very next month, that she yielded to his persuasions, against the better judgment of herself and friends, and suffered it to appear at an unfavourable season.

Notwithstanding the disadvantages arising from the extreme lateness of the season, and the absence of many of the first actors, Fatal Falsehood, though it was very far from having so great a run as Percy, was received with very great applause; in corroboration of which, we will insert two or three extracts from the letters of one of her sisters, who was in town nursing her during a severe illness, to another sister at Bristol.

Adelphi.

If the weather should be very warm, Fatal Falsehood is to be played only three or four nights. Hannah seems mighty indifferent about the matter.

Adelphi, 1779.

Just returned from the house; the applause was as great as her most sanguine friends could wish. Miss Young was interrupted three different times, in the speech on false honour, with bursts of approbation. When Rivers, who was thought dead, appeared in the fifth act, they quite shouted for joy. The curtain fell to slow music,—and now for the moment when the fate of the piece was to be decided! The audience did her the honour to testify their approbation by the warmest applause that could possibly be given; for when Hull came forward to ask their permission to perform it again, they did give leave by three loud shouts, and by many huzzaings. I will tell you a little anecdote. A lady observing to one of her maid-servants, when she came in from the play, that her eyes looked red, as if she had been crying, the girl, by way of apology, said, "Well,

ma'am, if I did it was no harm; a great many respectable people cried too." Percy, I hear, is translated into German, and has been performed at Vienna with great success.

Mrs. Reynolds to Miss H. More.

1779.

I congratulate *you*, myself, and all my sex on the happy and most beautiful exhibition of your play last night. Nothing should have prevented me from testifying my joy in person, but the apprehension that you might be much engaged this morning. I would wish to come when I could freely describe the sensations I felt—at least endeavour to describe them. Miss Young's recollection that Julia was absent, &c. was a beautiful and striking incident. My eyes are so weak I can scarcely see to write.

Ever affectionately yours,
H. Reynolds.

Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1779.

Thursday, the great important day!

I durst not wait upon you yesterday, my dear madam, believing that if you were pretty well (as I heartily wish) you would be much too busy to give me audience. Now I shall allow myself that pleasure very soon; perhaps follow my letter, since it cannot tell you all my joy, nor present half my congratulations. For you may be sure I have had my spies *en campagne*, and I know the shouts of approbation and applause that have been so justly bestowed upon you. I sent a coach-full, and well stuffed with five, chiefly men, whose oaken sticks were not idle; very unfashionable they would have been, had they remained so amid a pit that formed one chorus of applause—not one dissenting voice. And when it was given out for Tuesday, my maid told me she thought "they would have tore the house down" with clapping; for her part, she wept very much I found—so did many around her; but all approved, nor did she ever see a new play that was so applauded. I hope our friend Dr. Penny got in. (It seems the house was very full.) I sent him from the Duke of Beaufort's, where I dined; and shall be impatient to go myself with the duchess, who has a box for the third night. Even Lady Clifford has promised to go on that night. In short, my dear madam, this perfect triumph, though I expected no less after I read it, completes this holyday to me. My son is of age to-day, and my friend has had a most complete and merited success, to the unspeakable satisfaction of her affectionate

F. Boscawen.

P.S.—Do not say a word in answer to this, only how you do verbally. O that your health were but equal to your fame! Pray let me congratulate your good sister; I am sure she is just now quite happy. And poor Mrs. Garrick feels a melancholy pleasure!

Miss H. More returned to Bristol in June, and, in the December of the same year (1779) we find her again at Mrs. Garrick's, with whom she spent many subsequent winters at Hampton in quiet seclusion, gratifying her avidity for knowledge by enlarging her acquaintance with the best authors.

From H. More to her sister.

Hampton, 1780

Mrs. Garrick and I read to ourselves sans intermission. Mr. Matthew Henry and Mr. David Hume (two gentlemen of very different ways of thinking on some certain points) at present engage a great part of my time. I have almost finished the sixth volume, and am at this moment qualified to dispute with the Dean of Gloucester on tonnage and poundage monopolies, and ship-money.

Hampton, Jan. 1780.

Here we are still, and as little acquainted with what passes in the world as though we were five hundred, instead of fifteen miles out of it. Poor Mrs. Garrick is a greater recluse than ever, and has quite a horror at the thoughts of mixing in the world again. I fancy, indeed, she will never go much into it. Her garden and her family amuse her; but the idea of company is death to her. We never see a human face but each other's. Though in such deep retirement, I am never dull, because I am not reduced to the fatigue of entertaining dunces, or of being obliged to listen to *them*. We dress like a couple of Scaramouches, dispute like a couple of Jesuits, eat like a couple of aldermen, walk like a couple of porters, and read as much as any two doctors of either university.

I wish the fatal 20th was well over: I dread the anniversary of that day. On her wedding-day she went to the abbey, where she staid a good while; and she said she had been to spend the morning on her husband's grave: where, for the future, she should always pass her wedding-days. Yet she seems cheerful, and never indulges the least melancholy in company. She spends so very few hours in her bed, that I cannot imagine how she can be so well: but her very great activity, both of body and mind, has, humanly speaking, preserved her life.

Mrs. Boscawen had made a little party which she thought I should like: for you must know there are no assemblies or great parties till after Christmas, and till then it is not the

fashion to wear jewels, or dress at all. This last custom has, I think, good sense and economy in it, as it cuts off a couple of months from the seasons of extravagance: but I fancy it redeems but little from the nights, for one may lose a good deal of money in a very bad gown.

London, 1780.

I spent a very comfortable day yesterday with Miss Reynolds; only Dr. Johnson, and Mrs. Williams, and myself. He is in but poor health, but his mind has lost nothing of its vigour. He never opens his mouth but one learns something; one is sure either of hearing a new idea, or an old one expressed in an original manner. We did not part till eleven. He scolded me heartily, as usual, when I differed from him in opinion, and, as usual, laughed when I flattered him. I was very bold in combating some of his darling prejudices: nay, I ventured to defend one or two of the Puritans, whom I forced him to allow to be good men and good writers. He said he was not angry with me at all for liking Baxter; he liked him himself. "But then," said he, "Baxter was bred up in the establishment, and would have died in it if he could have got the living of Kidderminster. He was a very good man." Here he was wrong; for Baxter was offered a bishopric after the restoration.

I never saw Johnson really angry with me but once; and his displeasure did him so much honour that I loved him the better for it. I alluded rather flippantly, I fear, to some witty passage in "Tom Jones:" he replied, "I am shocked to hear you quote from so vicious a book. I am sorry to hear you have read it; a confession which no modest lady should ever make. I scarcely know a more corrupt work." I thanked him for his correction; assured him I thought full as ill of it now as he did, and had only read it at an age when I was more subject to be caught by the wit, than able to discern the mischief. Of Joseph Andrews I declared my decided abhorrence. He went so far as to refuse to Fielding the great talents which are ascribed to him, and broke out into a noble panegyric on his competitor Richardson; who, he said, was as superior to him in talents as in virtue, and whom he pronounced to be the greatest genius that had shed its lustre on this path of literature.

Hampton, 1780.

I have been spending a week with my good friends the Diceys: they have an admirable house, and as far as I can judge of the grounds, in their present winter dress, they are exceedingly pretty. The Duke of Bridgewater has a seat in the parish. We lived very placidly. The good parson read to us every evening. Mr. Dicey lives like a prince. I never saw any establishment more consistently liberal and handsome

throughout. Mr. D. saw me safe home, and loaded me with apples, cream, cheeses, &c.; not being able to procure any game. I really thought they would have made me bring away some of their clothes and furniture. As Mrs. Garrick's year is out, we have been very busy sending round her cards of thanks. I suppose they include seven hundred people; six hundred of whom I dare say she will hardly ever let in again.

We pack off on Tuesday for *good*, as they say, all except Liddy; and we regret leaving a new cow, and a young calf; and the birds that we feed three times a day at the window are to be left on board wages; a small loaf being to be brought them every morning. I think I have told you a great deal of news.

Your letters are as full of deaths as the weekly bills of mortality; or, as an honest man who dined here the other day called them, the "bills of morality." Who would have thought *they* had been *London bills*."

Adelphi, 1780.

The other evening they carried me to Mrs. Ord's assembly; I was quite dressed for the purpose; Mrs. Garrick gave me an elegant cap, and put it on herself; so that I was quite sure of being smart: but how short-lived is all human joy! and see what it is to live in the country! When I came into the drawing-rooms I found them full of company, every human creature in deep mourning, and I, poor I, all gorgeous in scarlet. I never recollected that the mourning for some foreign Wilhelmina Jaquelina was not over. However, I got over it as well as I could, made an apology, lamented the *ignorance* in which I had lately lived, and I hope this false step of mine will be buried in oblivion. There was all the old set; the Johnsons, the Burneys, the Chapones, the Thrales, the Smelts, the Pepyses, the Ramsays, and so on ad infinitum. Even Jacobite Johnson was in deep mourning. Mrs. Thrale, with whom I was not acquainted, though we have sometimes met, paid me particular attention, and desires that we may visit. I wish myself at Hampton already. The brightest circles do not amuse me, and they are got at with so much trouble and expense, and loss of time in dressing, that such considerations would outweigh all the pleasure, if it were even much greater than it is; and yet nothing could be more rational; no cards: most of the company were either wits or worthy people.

Mrs. —— the other day entertained us with all the old routine of abusing managers, and lamenting the hardships of authors. This, I suppose, has been the burden of every writer of play, farce, or interlude since the days of the stroller Thespis. For my part, I have made it a rule never to abuse either bookseller or manager, and therefore have gone on smoothly with them all. These complaints proceed chiefly from ignorance or unfairness: people expect more virtues from others

than they themselves would be capable of exerting in the same situation. There are people in the world who think I have more cause of complaint than Mrs. ——; *she* raved, *I* said not a word: to complain and resent is very easy; but it is my defect to value myself on being above it: they are passionate, I am proud; that is the true difference; if they will tolerate my vice, I ought to endure their weakness; and so we may rub on well enough for the short time we shall last. That silly creature C—— has written a book which is foolish and offensive beyond expression. She represents her heroine when she got up in the morning to have had "rose-coloured thoughts." Did you ever see any?

London, 1780

Cadell and I are going to prepare the second edition of "Fatal Falsehood." We talked over all the affairs. He gave me some very good advice, but says I am too good a Christian for an author. Poor Dr. Schomberg is dead; Beauclerc is dying: what terrible depredations have been made in that society in a very little time. The doctor had a great deal of polite learning, knew the world, and was agreeable; but he was the rankest infidel I ever knew: his company was much sought after, but I always dreaded it, as he took pleasure in inducing the particular subject which he knew would shock me. He thought me a poor, prejudiced, well-meaning bigot.

I expect the coach to take me to Mrs. Delany's, where I am going to visit for Mrs. Garrick, and for myself. I have sometimes the privilege of being present at her select parties, never exceeding eight, which are not elsewhere to be equalled: the venerable hostess herself, the friend and correspondent of Dean Swift; the Duchess-dowager of Portland, heiress to the great Earl of Oxford; my friend Horace Walpole, son to the minister of that name; the Countess of Bute, wife to the late first minister, and daughter (but of a very superior character) to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; Dowager-lady Leicester; Lady Wallingford, daughter of the famous Mississippi Law; and Mrs. Boscawen. They are all very far advanced in life and in knowledge, and it is a great honour for such a young nobody as I am to be admitted. I forgot to say, that here too I met Mrs. Dashwood, celebrated as the Delia of Hammond, in his beautiful elegies, written, more than any thing I have met with, in the spirit of his master, the tender Tibullus.

We had the finest party imaginable at Mrs. Boscawen's on Friday; there was all the *elite* of London, both for talents and fashion; I got into a lucky corner; Mrs. Carter and I, who had not met before this winter, fastened on each other, and agreed not to part for the evening. We got Soame Jenyns, Mr. Pepys, and Mr. Cole into our little circle, and were very sprightly. It was to have been entirely a talking-party, but our hostess very wisely put two card-tables in the outer draw-

ing-room, which weeded the company of some of the great, and all the dull, to the no small accommodation of the rest.

London, 1780.

My being obliged to walk so much makes me lose seeing my friends who call on me; and what is worse, it makes me lose my time, which will never call on me again. Yesterday I spent a very agreeable day in the country. The Bishop of St. Asaph and his family invited me to come to Wimbledon Park, Lord Spencer's charming villa, which he always lends to the bishop at this time of the year. I did not think there could have been so beautiful a place within seven miles of London; the park has as much variety of ground, and is as *un-Londonish* as if it were a hundred miles off; and I enjoyed the violets and the birds more than all the marechal powder and the music of this foolish town. There was a good deal of company at dinner, but we were quite at our ease, and strolled about, or sat in the library just as we liked. This last amused me much, for it was the Duchess of Marlborough's (old Sarah); and numbers of the books were presents to her from all the great authors of her time, which she has carefully written in the blank-leaves, for I believe she had the pride of being thought learned as well as rich and beautiful. I drank tea one day last week with our bishop (Newton), whom I never thought to see again on this side heaven; he has gone through enough to kill half the stout young men, and seems to be patched up again for a few months. They are superabundantly kind to me.

The gentlemen of the Museum came on Saturday to fetch poor Mr. Garrick's legacy of the old plays and curious black-letter books, though they were not things to be read, and are only valuable to antiquaries for their age and scarcity; yet I could not see them carried off without a pang.

I was, the other night, at Mrs. Ord's. Everybody was there, and in such a crowd I thought myself well off to be wedged in with Mr. Smelt, Langton, Ramsay, and Johnson. Johnson told me he had been with the king that morning, who enjoined him to add Spencer to his Lives of the Poets. I seconded the motion; he promised to think of it, but said the booksellers had not included him in their list of the poets.

I dined at Mrs. Boscawen's the other day very pleasantly, for Berenger was there, and was all himself, all chivalry, and blank-verse and anecdote. He told me some curious stories of Pope, with whom he used to spend the summer at his uncle's, Lord Cobham, of whom Pope asserts, you know, that he would feel the "ruling passion strong in death," and that "save my country, Heaven," would be his last words. But what shows that Pope was not so good a prophet as a poet (though the ancients sometimes express both by the same word) was, that in his last moments, not being able to carry

a glass of jelly to his mouth, he was in such a passion, feeling his own weakness, that he threw jelly, glass and all, into Lady Chatham's face, and expired.

Instead of going to Audley-street, where I was invited, I went to Mrs. Reynolds's, and sat for my picture. Just as she began to paint, in came Dr. Johnson, who staid the whole time, and said good things by way of making me look well. I did not forget to ask him for a page for your memorandum-book,* and he promised to write, but said you ought to be contented with a quotation; this, however, I told him you would not accept.

Hampton, 1780.

Hampton is very clean, very green, very beautiful, and very melancholy; but the "long dear calm of fixed repose" suits me mightily after the hurry of London. We have been on the wing every day this week; our way is to walk out four or five miles, to some of the prettiest villages or prospects, and when we are quite tired, we get into the coach, which is waiting for us with our books, and we come home to dinner as hungry as Dragon himself. I took an airing by myself one morning to Hounslow, and paid a visit to the Sheridans at their country-house, where I had a very agreeable hour or two.

Miss More, soon after this letter (which was written in the spring of 1780), paid a visit of a few days at Dr. Kennicott's, at Oxford, where she was introduced to the society of many persons valuable for their piety and learning; among the foremost of whom we may rank Dr. Horne,† then president of Magdalen College, and afterward Bishop of Norwich, and with this excellent man she preserved an uninterrupted friendship till his death. From Oxford she proceeded to Bristol, where she remained till the 16th of December, 1780, at which time she returned to pay her annual visit to Mrs. Garrick, and we find her first letter dated from Hampton. But before we proceed with this part of the narrative, we will introduce two or three letters which passed between her and Mrs. Boscawen just before her leaving Bristol.

From Mrs. Boscawen.

1780.

I was not surprised, my dear madam, to find that the Muses met you on the banks of the Isis and the Charwell, for those are their favourite haunts, and you, I am sure, one of their favourite

* A collection of autographs of eminent persons which her sister was making at that time.

† It was to the daughter of the bishop that she afterward addressed the "Heroic Epistle to Sally Horne," in the blank-leaves of "Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales," which she presented to the child, then three years old.

votaries. But you may be surprised, my friend, that having imparted to me so kindly the result of your conference with those agreeable sisters, I should never have had the gratitude to say "Thank ye." The truth is, I am but just returned home, when I catch up bad pens, and worse paper, in haste, to tell you that I am indeed very grateful for the acceptable present you have made me; therefore do not trust to appearances, especially when they make against the fidelity and attachment of your affectionate friend.

I have been in Kent, in a house which once had for its mistress the beauteous Sacharissa; her fair form, if I opened my door, was the first to salute my eyes; then, if I turned, the gallant Sir Philip Sidney next presented himself. Immense oaks, enormous beeches, which had shaded them, shaded me. I pleased myself with the thought. I remember when I was with Lady Gower, she took me a walk one day, to a very pleasant part of the forest, to see a tall oak, under which Mr. Pope used to sit; she had written very legibly on a board, "Here Pope sung," and fixed it to the tree, higher than any one can reach to deface it. Thus you poets dignify all you touch! I spent my time very agreeably with my worthy friend Lady Smith, widow to Sir Sydney Smith, late lord-chief-baron, and great-grandson to Sacharissa, Countess of Sunderland. That lady's Bible, which I observed in the library, consisted of six volumes in thin quarto, printed by Field. The Pentateuch was the first; the historical books made the second; Ezra, Nehemiah, with the Psalms, Proverbs, &c., made the third; the fourth contained the Prophets; the fifth the Gospels and Acts; the sixth the Epistles and Revelations. Each had its peculiar title-page, telling its contents, over and above the general one. I do not remember to have seen such a Bible, and I tell you of it, as one who has gleaned many an ear of corn from Dr. Kennicott's sheaves.

Yes, my dear madam, we well understand the royal Psalmist's expressive phrase, "The madness of the people;" we have felt, and do believe (many of us, I trust), that only the Almighty Power which stills the raging of the sea delivered us from it.* Whoever are his instruments for good are thereby honoured, and deserving of esteem from their countrymen. Here it is said that the king himself was our benefactor.

You tell me, my dear madam, that you are deep in Homer and Tasso. I shall soon then expect, and hope for an epic poem, *de votre façon*. Some spark will communicate to that train of poetic fire *qui vous appartient*, and the explosion will ascend in many a brilliant star. I have been fascinated by two charming poets, and to them have devoted every moment of leisure I could find or make, you will easily guess that I allude to Mr. Mason's Life of Gray; most likely it is to be

* Written in the year of the riots.

found at Bristol, but lest it should not, for very possibly the booksellers there are not so eager for it as they would be for a political pamphlet, I have taken the liberty of sending it you, and I hope you are at this instant giving audience to your brother poets, which, I doubt not, will occupy you very agreeably.

I made your compliments to Mrs. Montagu, but I can by no means do justice to her answer. She charged me to return, not only compliments, for those, she said, were too common, but something that expressed very high esteem, and yet not that alone, but also affection. And in this feeling she is joined most heartily by, my dear madam,

Your sincere and faithful,

F. B.

To Mrs. Boscawen.

Bristol, May 13th, 1780.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I received a few days ago a most valuable treasure, Mr. Mason's Life of Gray, with the works of the latter. As there was not the least shadow of appearance from whom it came, perhaps you will conclude I was very busy in conjecturing. No such thing, my dear madam, the action brought its explanation along with it, and I was not a moment in determining that so elegant and flattering a present could only be sent me by the friend I have now the honour of addressing. This idea had so fully impressed itself upon my mind, that I should have troubled you with my thanks for it, even if I had not had the honour of receiving the most obliging letter in the world two days after, which convinced me I was not mistaken.

I staid rather longer with my friend at Hampton than I intended, one has always so many last words to say. The Sheridans were of our party for a few days; need I say they embellished it? Your friend Mr. Cambridge spent one morning with us; he did me the favour of repeating to me some parodies, for which I think he has a peculiar talent; one in particular highly pleased me, it is a passage from Lucan, in which he introduces Wilkes instead of Cæsar. Do you remember to have seen it?

How do you like the Wreath of Fashion, by Tickell (grandson of Addison's Tickell)? I hope you have seen it, and like it. I was much entertained with it, if I may say so of a thing which glances a little satirically at some of my acquaintance; the satire, however, is well-mannered and decent, and not of that immoral and flagitious kind which has lately been so much written and encouraged. In my humble opinion, he bids fair to become one of the best of our modern bards; if he has any fault, I think it is the want of plan and perspicuity, but he is very young, and will write still better. I suppose

you have read Mr. Wharton's second volume; I have not seen it, but hear that he totally rejects the authenticity of Rowley's Poems; so does Johnson, so does Percy, so do most of the antiquaries; but neither their authority nor their reasonings have entirely convinced your obstinate friend.*

I enclose for your *correction* (remember that, dear madam) an epitaph I was prevailed upon to write for a very worthy lady of this neighbourhood. She was a pattern of piety and goodness. As I know no species of composition in which one has less chance of succeeding (at least your little *shabby authors*), I would gladly have been excused, but could not. Among many other faults, it has one which is very material, and yet it seems almost to have the apology of necessity. All good critics, you know, have agreed that the introduction of the person's name is indispensable in all sepulchral inscriptions; and I am so well convinced of the justness of this remark, that I think an epitaph without a name belongs to nobody: but here is my difficulty, this good lady had two names, so peculiarly unlucky, and so obnoxious to puns, Fortune Little, that I would defy any poet, from Chaucer to Cumberland, to introduce either of them with the least degree of gravity or dignity. I have not yet sent it to the sculptor, who is polishing a very fine tablet of marble for me to spoil.

Have you had any of your charming *parties choisies* lately—all daffodil, all rose, all jonquil, as Madame de Sevigné says?

I have scarcely left myself room to say how much I am, my dear madam, your ever obliged and faithful

H. More.

To the same.

Bristol, August 3, 1780.

My dear Madam,

You do not forbid me to write to you; I therefore venture to do it without apology, and, albeit I am but little worthy of the honour, I am sensible, truly sensible of the happiness. Every letter I joyfully catch hold of, as a full and reasonable pretence to trouble you *de nouveau* with my nonsense. I think I once ventured to assert, and I believe you did not contradict it, that places made a considerable change in opinions, and that a composition or a companion which we should think insupportable in town will do very passably in the country; in consequence of this doctrine, I venture to send you a copy of a paltry ode, though, in allowing for the operation of local circumstances on the mind, I am well aware I ought to have made the same exception in favour of Glanvilla which you once did in behalf of Hampton. If the enclosed stanzas do not prove my wit (and I think it is pretty clear that they will

* She was convinced afterward.

not), they will at least show the opinion I have of your disposition to forgive, and my readiness to furnish you with occasions for exerting it.

And so, madam, you sometimes sit under the oak where Pope sat! No druid ever venerated that hallowed plant, or its more hallowed mistletoe, on account of the spirit it enclosed, as I should venerate this from admiration of the spirit it once sheltered! And so you live in shades, and read Gibbon; he is an entertaining and philosophical historian, yet, as Ganganelli said to Count Algarotti, "I wish these shining wits, in spite of all their philosophy, would manage matters so that one might hope to meet them in heaven; for one is very sorry to be deprived of such agreeable company to all eternity." For my own part, I am willing to compound for less wit and more faith, though I agree with Mr. Jenyns that it requires an infinite degree of credulity to be an infidel.

I return at intervals to my charming book, with all the eagerness of a glutton. I went through it with more than pleasure —with enthusiasm. I had always a passion for Gray, which his letters are calculated to increase. His poetry is so exquisite, that the delight I feel in reading him is generally mixed with regret that he wrote so little; a sentiment which would diminish the pleasure of it, were it not so perfect as to admit of no diminution.

Though my great admiration of the poetical works of Gray had made me form the highest expectations of his letters, yet my ideas were all fulfilled upon reading them. In my poor opinion they possess all the graces and all the ease which I apprehend ought to distinguish this familiar species of composition. They have also another and a higher excellence: the temper and spirit he almost constantly discovers in the unguarded confidence and security of friendship, will rank him among the most amiable of men; as his charming verses will give him a place among the first of lyric poets. The pleasure one feels on reading the letters of great and eminent persons, is of a very different kind from that which one receives from their more elaborate works; it is being admitted, as it were, to their very closets and bosoms: whereas the other is only being received in their drawing-rooms on state days. In the present work, Mr. Mason shows himself to be something better than a good poet; never was there a more generous editor or more faithful friend! What an exquisite pleasure does he take in doing honour to the departed! May his own fame meet with such a guardian, and his own life with such a biographer.

I am also plunged deep in the Lusiad, and am now as much interested in the fortunes of the brave and pious Gama, as ever I was in those of the wandering Greek. *Qui mores hominum multorum vidit.* I began to fear all my enthusiasm was dead, it not having given any signs of life for a long time; but

Camoens and Mickle, between them, have contrived to rouse a small portion of it, so that whether it was actually dead, or whether, like the god Baal, it was sleeping, or gone a journey, I cannot tell.

I have looked over *Monsieur* Shakspeare, as you properly called it. Don't you think it has a vast deal of merit? But how miserably inadequate must a translation of Shakspeare ever be! There is the stature, but where is the grace?—the shape, but where is the mien?—the features, but where is the eye—

"Glancing from earth to heaven, from heaven to earth?"

There is the body, but where is the living spirit, the animating principle? It is here, as well as in divine things, that the letter killeth. Yet I honour the Comte de Camelan and his associates. What lover of Shakspeare but *must* honour them? It would be an invidious task to glean up two or three trifling mistakes, when we ought rather to wonder at finding so few.

My dear and excellent friends Mrs. E. Bouverie, Captain and Mrs. Middleton, and Mrs. Lloyd have been at Clifton ever since my return, which has been very agreeable to me. We are in daily expectation of a visit from —— ——, which we are promised by the last post.

Adieu, my dearest madam, I wish you perfect health, and sunless bowers, which I conceive to be a very characteristic dog-day wish. You anticipated for me *les chaleurs caniculaires*, and mitigated them by your sweet pretty fan.

Your most obedient and obliged,

H. More.

To Mrs. Boscawen.

Bristol, 1780.

My dear Madam,

It has been long the fashion to make the most lamentable *Jeremiades* on the badness of the times, but we were made to believe that a new parliament would repair a great part of these evils. Now I am a living witness that this was a false prediction, for, alas! out of the small number of friends and acquaintance I had the honour to boast of in the British senate, hardly any remain—not to take care of my liberty, for I always thought that would take care of itself, when it was so finely set a going at the Revolution,—but to give me a few franks; for that, dear madam, is the source and object of this present philippic against the new parliament. I am afraid, though, that this complaint is impolitic, because it looks as if my friends were in the opposition, and that I had not the good fortune to be known to any of the honourable fraternity of new gentlemen, traders, and authors who have crept in.

Your obliging letter from Badminton, my dear madam, found me (is not that an hibernicism?) gone on a ramble into Wiltshire, Hants, &c. I did homage to Pan and Sylvanus, and all the rural deities of Stourhead; paid my devoirs to the Apollo Belvidere, and the fair "statue which enchants the world" at Wilton, which, as the critic said of the wood and water at Marli, were it not for the pictures and statues, would be the dullest place in the world. But the simple graces and plain magnificence of Lord Palmerston's sweet place at Romsey are inexpressibly agreeable. I saw nothing so light, *riant*, and habitable; yet its being new-built destroys that satisfaction which arises from the association of ideas in surveying halls of "gray renown," terrific armour, worn perhaps by heroes who fought the battles of the Tudors and Plantagenets; and avenues of oaks, which have heard the sound of "Sidney's song, perchance of Surrey's reed." From this sort of combination of remote images we derive, I believe, some of the liveliest pleasures we enjoy; and these delights of the imagination seem to fill up the chasm between those of the senses and of reason; they have less keenness than the one, and less solidity than the other; yet is their dominion not less powerful or less pleasant. One reason of my making this tour was to avoid the bustle of the Bristol election; but, in keeping clear of Scylla, I dashed against Charybdis; for as it was the great and universal saturnalia of the nation, I ran into the very jaws of half a dozen country elections, of which, had I had the honour to be a composer of speeches, I might have made good use.

Many thanks, my dear madam, for Mr. Walpole's sensible, temperate, and humane pamphlet. I am not *quite* a convert yet to his side of the Chattertonian controversy, though this elegant writer, and all the antiquaries and critics in the world are against me; but I like much the candid regret he everywhere discovers at not having fostered this unfortunate lad, whose profligate manners, however, I too much fear, would not have done credit to any patronage. Poor Mrs. G. read it, and was more interested than I have seen her.

I am to thank you for "Cardiphonia." I like it prodigiously; it is full of vital, experimental religion. I thought I liked the first three letters best, but I have not read half the book. Who is the author? From his going a little out of his way to censure the Latin poets, I suspect he is of the calumniated school, though I have found nothing but rational and consistent piety.

I have just finished Johnson's Life of Addison. There is the same exquisite discrimination of character, the same exactness of criticism, and moral discernment, which have distinguished and dignified the other writings of this truly great biographer. The only thing I am inclined to quarrel with him for is, that he has perpetuated the malignity of that foe to genius and to worth, John Dennis, of crabbed memory. He has given a quotation of forty or fifty pages from this old

snarler's barking at Cato; which produces these two evils, that we lose forty or fifty pages of Johnson's elegant writing, and that the satire, which has some acuteness and more malice, will, by this means, be rescued from that oblivion into which Dennis had fallen; and the slander will now be as durable as its object. *Entre nous*, what Johnson says of Cato may be applied to *his* Irene; the same exalted sentiments, harmonious verse, and highly polished style, and the same deficiency in what relates to the passions and affections. My dear madam, you are glad my paper is out, and I am sorry, since I have not room to tell you with what truth I am,

Yours, affectionately, H. M.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1780.

This fine day seems to invite the world abroad, all but one, who is retired with the gentle, the virtuous, the ill-fated Elwina; she brought to my mind an old song, addressed to Fortune, who is accused thus, I think:

Busy, busy still art thou,
To bind the loveless, joyless vow;
The heart from pleasure to delude,
And join the gentle to the rude.

How rude is the ferocious Douglas! how gentle the sweet Elwina! Oh for Mrs. Cibber to act her, just as I saw her forty years ago! for then she was pretty, and so interesting, and with so settled a melancholy in her countenance, that it was beyond all acting. You have made me weep till my eyes are quite red; need I say more? I am at Raby Castle, and I know not how to come back and talk over our business soberly.

Wednesday, 10th.—I have read Percy, my dear madam, a second time to-day aloud to the Duchess of Beaufort and Mrs. Leveson; they will tell you that tears often stopped my voice; they were exceedingly pleased with it, and indeed seemed worthy to judge, by the delight they expressed at particular passages which were wonderfully excellent. I cannot find time to select those which so peculiarly pleased me, indeed I do not know if I have paper enough in my custody to transcribe them, were I so disposed; but my order is to blame, not commend—to criticise, not admire, and this I shall totally disobey, and I will tell you why: not that I suppose the old woman to whom Moliere read his plays did not find something that she fancied might be altered for the better—but that yours, having received the criticism of Mr. Garrick, I have no idea it can have or want any other. Law and criticism must stop somewhere; the former, from appeal to appeal, ends (*en dernier resort*) with the House of Lords. Mr. Garrick was undoubtedly the House of Lords to dramatic poets; and his fiat precludes, I really think, all other judgment.

Mrs. Walsingham has been reading your essays, and likes them (especially that on Education) as much as I promised her she would; but on the threshold she stumbled, and wrote me word that Lady Denbigh and she were in the greatest wrath against you for allowing the men so much the superiority. She said she longed to answer you; I begged she would; nothing would have pleased me better than to have seen you two *aux mains;* she would have greatly the advantage, because every thing you wrote would have proved her to be in the right. I do not know whether you understand me; if not, I shall say, "None so blind as those that will not see." Indeed I cannot help thinking that in one part of your introduction you *do* give up our cause too much; and where shall we find a champion, if you (armed at all points) desert us? However, I did not desert *you*, and insisted that you only contended for our merit being of a distinct and different kind, exhorting us always to preserve that distinction.

Since you have told me of Johnson's Life of Addison, I have sought it everywhere, from the Bodleian Library at Oxford to Mr. Hookham's warehouse in Bruton-street, but in vain. I plead that Miss More has read it, and am answered, "To Miss More, perhaps, the manuscript has been intrusted." *Dites moi ce qui en est*, and, if you can, how I may come by it. I have claims upon Dr. Johnson, but as he never knows me when he meets me, they are stifled in the cradle; for he must know who I am before he can remember that I got him Mr. Spence's manuscripts. I am sure, beforehand, that I shall be entirely of your mind about Dennis's Criticism on Cato. Adieu, my dear madam,

Your very affectionate, F. B.

Hannah More was now again at Hampton, and thus writes to one of her sisters:—

Hampton, 1780.

I would wish you a merry Christmas, as well as a happy New-year, but that I hate the word merry *so* applied; it is a fitter epithet for a *bacchanalian* than a *Christian* festival, and seems an apology for idle mirth and injurious excess. What frost—what snow! By-the-by, if this same snow were of human invention, I should be apt to say I did not like it. Yet the vast expanse of glistening white on the ground—the fluid brilliants dropping from the trees—and the green-house full of beautiful blossoms and oranges, make it altogether look like some region of enchantment; and as the gravel-walks are all swept clean, I parade an hour or two every morning.

I enclose you my Ode on the Marquis of Worcester's birthday: it was impossible to refuse a request couched in such terms, and from such a friend as Mrs. Boscawen; but of all the wild flowers in the wilderness, that she should think an

ode could spring up in such a soil is curious. I wrote every line of it one night after eleven o'clock. I will not pretend to say it would have been better if I had had more time; but this I will say, it could not well have been worse. The concluding stanza was occasioned by the Dutch war, which I heard of that day. I believe you will think I have invoked the muse which inspired Mrs. Mary Deverill, *parsoness* and *poetess*, when she sang in elegiac strains the pity-moving story of the thirty poisoned chickens!

Hampton, 1781.

If any commit any sin, or do any good here, it must be in thought, for our words are few, and our deeds none at all. Poor Hermes Harris is dead! everybody is dead, I think; one is almost ashamed of being alive! That you may not think I pass my time quite idly, I must tell you that I had begun *Belshazzar;* I liked the subject, and have made some progress in it. But that, and all my other employments, have given way to the melancholy occupation of reading over with Mrs. Garrick all the private letters of the dear deceased master of this melancholy mansion. The employment, though sad, is not without its amusement: it is reading the friendly correspondence of all the men who have made a figure in the annals of business or of literature for the last forty years; for I think I hardly miss a name of any eminence in Great Britain, and not many in France: it includes also all his answers; some of the first wits in the country, confessing their obligations over and over again to his bounty; money given to some, and lent to such numbers as would be incredible, if one did not read it in their own letters. It is not the least instructive part of this employment to consider where almost all these great men are now! The play-writers, where are they? and the poets, are their fires extinguished? Did Lord Bath, or Bishop Warburton, or Lord Chatham, or Goldsmith, or Churchill, or Chesterfield trouble themselves with thinking that the heads which dictated those bright epistles would so soon be laid low? Did they imagine that such a nobody as I am, whom they would have disdained to have reckoned "with the dogs of their flock," should have had the arranging and disposing of them? I found my own letters, but I thought it a breach of trust to take them till they are all finally disposed of.

I enclose you Dean Tucker's answer to my letter of congratulation.

From Dean Tucker to Miss H. More.

Glouoester, Feb. 3, 1781.

My dear Miss,

I should have been glad of the honour of Miss More's correspondence on any occasion—on the present it was peculiarly

agreeable. I have very *literally* taken an help *meet for me*. She has all the useful qualifications, but none of the *brilliant*. And though it is impossible to say what alterations time may produce, yet I think I ought to acknowledge that the present prospect is very promising, and that we bid fair for putting in a claim for a rasher or two, if not for the whole flitch of bacon. My reasons are the following:—Our tempers and dispositions, our pleasures, or pursuits, can hardly ever be brought to clash with each other. I reign sole monarch, or fancy I reign, throughout the boundless regions of politics or metaphysics; while my queen acts the majestic part very well in the lesser domains of common sense and common life. Whether these two empires may be so far extended as to approach each other, whereby we may hereafter complain of mutual encroachments, and quarrel about the limits, is more than I am able to foretel. But I think the probability is on the other side; because I do not feel a spark of ambition to invade her province, and she has too much sang froid on her part to be capable of being worked up either into a metaphysical or political ferment. She is a mere *Hickman* in petticoats, the very counterpart of the insipid *he*-thing which you once said was fit for nothing but to take care of the bandboxes on a journey, and to keep your reckoning. She is fond of this employment, and seems to be so well calculated for keeping the reckoning throughout the journey of life, that I have ventured to borrow fifty pounds from our common fund (which I think at the end of the year will not be missed), in order to make a provision for the support of our young philosopher at Oxford.* The money is lodged in Dr. Adams's hands; and if you should call upon your friends there any time in April or May, &c., perhaps you may see him in his academic dress.

But after he is entered, what shall we do with him? This is a difficulty which neither Dr. Adams nor I can well resolve. He knows a great deal too much to want the instructions of a tutor. And yet there is a knowledge, perhaps the most useful of any, in which he is deficient, the knowledge of the world, and an experience in the ways of men. But this is a science which books and colleges are not calculated to teach. He talks well on all subjects; but he is dilatory, and seems unwilling to commit his thoughts to writing. I fear that he is a kind of voluptuary in learning, and regards books with the same view that an alderman eats turtle. However, such parts and such talents as his ought to have every advantage for displaying themselves. I felt the want of such assistance in my little way when I was somewhat in his situation; and therefore resolved with myself, at an early period in life, that if ever Providence should enable me to call uncommon or useful talents out

* The eccentric but highly-gifted John Henderson.

of obscurity, I would do it. That opportunity Providence has now put into my hands.

You must have, by every post, fresher accounts from Bristol than any that I can send. If mine are to be depended on, the American government, alias the *mob-cracy*, is already set up in that place, and will extend itself more and more, if not checked in time. Surely a spirit of insanity and infatuation hath broken loose, and spread itself all over our *enlightened world*, as it is improperly called. For, instead of enjoying light, we grope on still in darkness: not one country now at war, not one party in our divided, distracted state at home, pursuing their own solid interests, or having a regard to any thing beyond the gratifying of their wishes for the present hour. But I console myself with the reflection, that Providence is ever bringing good out of evil, and that we are never so near a peace as when the contenders on all sides are convinced by their own *feelings* that they are contending about nothing.

I do not presume to advise you to marry a *Hickman*, for I know you cannot digest such a thought. But I do assure you that my *Hickwoman*, if I may use the term, makes me very happy when she says that all my friends are hers; and that she particularly desires to join in most respectful compliments to her sister More; for she is the daughter of a clergyman, as well as yourself. Dear madam,

Your greatly obliged and most obedient
humble servant,

J. TUCKER.

From H. More to her sister.

Adelphi, 1781.

We have stolen away for a few days to town, but I am now so habituated to quiet, that I have scarcely the heart to go out, though I am come here on purpose. As to poor Mrs. Garrick, she keeps herself as secret as a piece of smuggled goods, and neither stirs out herself nor lets anybody in. The calm of Hampton is such fixed repose, that an old woman crying fish, or the postman ringing at the door, is an event which excites attention. Mrs. Boscawen is very full of the ode:* she would make me hear how finely she has brought herself to read it by daily practice; but she says she has one cruel mortification, she wishes everybody to see it, and yet has not the courage to show it to any one unless I will strike out the two lines about Glanvilla, which I begged to be excused doing. Be cautious, I entreat, of giving copies; my friends know I am so fearful of newspapers, that Mrs. Kennicott actually refused "Sally Horne" to the Bishop of London.† She has told him

* On the Marquis of Worcester's birth-day.
† Bishop Lowth.

she will ask my consent, which I do not know very well how to refuse. But it shall be on condition that he gives a handsome piece of his writing to your memorandum-book, for I am too much a Bristol woman to give something for nothing.

To the same.

Hampton, 1781.

We courageously came back yesterday in all the snow; I was desirous to do it, having but a short time now to stay here, and I want a little for writing,* that I may afford to be idle in town with less regret. We are forbidden to do *evil* that *good* may come of it, and this looks like doing *good* that *evil* may come of it.

I have just waded through almost nine hundred pages of Madan's book, but still retain all my prejudices in favour of monogamy. There never was such a strange book under such a mask of holiness; in short, I have as great an antipathy to some of the gospel according to Mr. Madan, as ever an infidel had to the Gospel according to St. Matthew. A friend of mine says of him, "This saint will make sinners after his death." He treats the *New Testament* very cavalierly, under pretence of the most flaming veneration for the *Old*. And is quite outrageous at the general mistake, he says, that all modern Christians make, that Christ taught a more perfect morality than Moses. I believe the Holy Scriptures were never before made the cover, nay, the *vehicle*, of so much indecency.

Your history of the election I read to Mrs. Garrick, and we agreed it deserved a place in the book called *great events from small causes*. Methinks I envy Burke that "consciousness of his worth" which he must feel on considering himself rejected only because his talents were a crime. But Providence has wisely contrived to render all its dispensations equal, by making those talents which set one man so much above another, of no esteem in the opinion of those who are without them. The direct contrary is the case with riches, they are most admired by those who want them, and this becomes a spur to industry. So that I do think that even in this world things are carried hand-in-hand more equally than many are willing to allow; for the "painful pre-eminence" is so mixed with mortification and disappointment, that its pleasures, I believe, do not atone for the envy and plague which it brings. For is it not much better to be easy and happy now, than talked of a thousand years hence, when you either will not know it or will despise it.

* She was at this time proceeding with the "Sacred Dramas."

To the same.

London, 1781.

I heard from a person who attended the trial of Lord George Gordon, that the noble prisoner (as the papers call him) had a quarto Bible open before him all the time, and was very angry because he was not permitted to read four chapters in Zechariah. I can less forgive an affectation of enthusiasm in him, because he is a man of loose morals; where the morals are exact, I can make great allowance for a heated imagination, strong prejudices, or a wrong bias of judgment. Though I have not the least doubt that he deserved punishment, yet I am glad he is acquitted, for it disappoints the party, and uncanonizes the martyr.

In the evening I went to Audley-street, where pride met with a small mortification; for, not being very well recovered from my rheumatic headache, and expecting to meet only the Jenynses and the Coles, I went in quite a dishabille, when I found Lady Edgecombe, the York family, Bishop of Exeter, and, in short, a brilliant, though a small assembly. I was just able to listen, though not to talk, and was very well seated between Soame Jenyns, the bishop, and Chamberlayne. The other morning, Mrs. Garrick took me to Leverian museum; for, to the scandal of my taste, I had never seen it before. If any man had the misfortune to be an atheist, I think he might be converted by seeing that vast book of various nature collected in a room, as Galen is recorded to have been by his own discoveries in physiology. And yet Buffon is said to be an unbeliever!

Public thanksgivings were returned last Sunday in several churches for the acquittal of Lord George Gordon. I know some who actually heard it in Audley chapel. The famous Mr. Tighe read to us the other evening. He was so polite as to lament that he had not Jephson's tragedy (the Count of Narbonne) in his pocket; but I was not sorry, for I must have sunk very low in his opinion, as he expects everybody to faint away, and I am no hand at fainting.

London, 1781.

Mrs. B. having repeatedly desired Johnson to look over her new play of the "Siege of Sinope" before it was acted, he always found means to evade it; at last she pressed him so closely that he actually refused to do it, and told her that she herself, by carefully looking it over, would be able to see if there was any thing amiss as well as he could. "But, sir," said she, "I have no time. I have already so many irons in the fire."—"Why, then, madam," said he (quite out of patience), "the best thing I can advise you to do is to put your tragedy

along with your irons."* I dined the other day with Miss Sharpe: among the company was Mrs. Carter and Lady Charlotte Wentworth: this last, to the credit of opposition (for she is Lord Rockingham's sister), is one of the best divines for a woman of quality I have met with. We had a very comfortable, rational day.

The Kennicotts dined here with some of their friends. When the doctor hobbled in on his two sticks, he put a piece of paper into my hand. I cried out, "O, I will not read it to myself, whatever it is, it shall be made public for the good of the company." I put it into a gentleman's hands who I knew read well, but imagine my surprise at hearing the following verses, signed by no less a personage than Bishop Lowth:—

HANNÆ MORÆ.

VIRGINI PIÆ ERUDITÆ, ELEGANTI, INGENIO, FACUNDIA ET SAPIENTIA PARITER ILLUSTRI.

"Omnes Sulpiciam legant puellæ,"
Omnes hanc pueri legant senesque,
Omnes hanc hilares, et hanc severi.
Quæ palmam geminas tulit per artes,
"Et vinctæ pede vocis et solutæ!"
Cujus qui pede legerit soluta,
Nullam dixerit esse tersiorem!
Cujus carmina qui bene estimarit
Nullam dixerit esse sanctiorem!
Huic adsunt Charites faventque Musæ,
Dum sic pectora Virginum tenella
Pulchris imbuit, artibus, sequaces
Exemplo monitis, amore, nutu,
Informans animos; Stiloque signat,
Mox ventura quod Addisonianis
Possint secula comparare chartis.

I spent an agreeable hour at my dear Mrs. Vesey's, for, to the general astonishment, her poor husband has got another reprieve. I know no house where there is such good rational society, and a conversation so general, so easy, and so unpretending.

* In the course of the theatrical management of her friend David Garrick, he had irritated the feelings of the authoress here alluded to, by the rejection of her tragedy. The lady indulged her spleen in a novel, the express purpose of which was to ridicule and vilify the character of the manager. Miss H. More was prevailed upon to write a criticism on the work for the Gentleman's Magazine, which she performed with much spirit and effect; but finding, as she declared, so much pleasure in the free indulgence of sarcastic humour, she resolved never again to trust herself with the use of such a weapon, and to this resolution she strictly adhered through the remainder of her life.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Adelphi, February, 1781.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Your most agreeable little *volume* of *six pages* never could have been bestowed upon a reader more worthy of it, if the highest veneration for the author, and the keenest relish for the composition, could give the reader a claim to the title of worthy; but, alas! yours, like many other *valuable works*, is of so serious a cast as to have given me fully as much pain as pleasure. How much do I pity the poor ——s, I am afraid it will be almost too much for our excellent friend Mrs. ——. I grieve that her great virtues are exposed to such severe trials. Reason, religion, and time, when they come to operate, do wonders,—such wonders as the sufferer in the first attack of sorrow has no conception of. Yet one cannot but lament that persons of the best sense and most piety suffer more, perhaps, from the first assaults of affliction than any others; and those who bear distress with the most dignity, I am persuaded, feel it with the greatest intenseness. This good family possess the only consolation which can mitigate such distress—a deep sense of the truth and efficacy of the Christian religion; yet I am going to say a bold thing—I never could observe that nature suffered the less because grace triumphed the more. And hence arises, as I take it, the glory of the Christian sufferer,—he feels affliction more intensely than a bad man, or grace would not have its perfect work; as it would not be difficult to subdue that which it was not difficult to endure. Poor Lady ——, too! her distress is a very poignant one indeed; I begin to think, happy are those who do not multiply their chances of suffering, by increasing their connections.

I can better *send* you the bishop's verses than I could *give* them to you, for reasons which will be clear enough when you see them; as, without the least affectation, I am confounded by the praise which he gives me only because he does not know me. I would not wish any copy to be taken, as I would not for the world they should get into print, which would never be attributed to accident, but to the most egregious vanity in me; and the bishop writes so little, and so excellently, that people are glad to catch at any thing of his. I had a particular request from his lordship to give him a copy of my childish verses on Mother Bunch's Tales; you will wonder, my dear madam, that so wise a personage should pardon my impertinence, in attacking learning in her own proper fort. You will not forget that the idea of new dressing the popular old poem of "Learning is better than house and land," in this my renowned work of Mother Bunch's Tales, was suggested to me by Mr. Pope's having modernized a morsel of no less popularity in this fine couplet,—

"Above how high progressive life may go,
How wide around, how deep extend below."

which I really believe, though he had never the candour to own it as I have, he stole from those beautiful and original lines, which are in more mouths than any verses of mine will ever be,—

"Here you go up, up, up; and here you go down, down, downy;
And here you go backward and forward; and here you go round, round, roundy."

When I was in Oxford last summer, I said so much in commendation of my favourite book, De l'Histoire de Messieurs de Port Royal, that it excited great desire in several reverend doctors to see it, no one there having ever met with it but Dr. Horne, who admired it extremely (vous savez qu'il a une petite teinture du mystique). The libraries were searched, but no such book could be found. Mrs. Kennicott repeating my account of it to the Bishop of Llandaff, he was resolved to get it, and accordingly sent to Holland for two sets, but received for answer that it was quite out of print, and never could be got but by chance in a catalogue. Now, my dear madam, I do not intercede for the bishop, who, no doubt, would call me enthusiast, and a thousand bad names, for so warmly recommending a book in which it must be confessed there is some popish trumpery, and a little mystical rubbish; but may I venture to ask you to lend it to the Kennicotts for a few days? If you are so good as to indulge me, you will, perhaps, add the further favour of letting your servant leave it at Dr. Kennicott's. I wish some of these great divines would translate it, with all its fire of devotion, and without any of the smoke; which, however, does not conceal its brightness. I think it would do a great deal of good.

And now, my dear madam, you will readily allow that I have said enough of myself. I do not expose myself so much to everybody; and I own it to be very hard that you should bear all the weight of my folly and impertinence, merely as a mark of my esteem and respect. If I do not speak or write of my foolish verses to any other person, it is because I know no one else who unites so great a relish for good things, with so much charity for indifferent ones. I hope I need not say in which class I place my own. There is no room, I think, for an equivoque. Adieu, my dear madam,

Your most faithful and obliged,
H. More.

To one of her sisters.

London, 1781.

Tell my father I am quite delighted with his verses, and particularly that he could write them in so good a hand; I

have put them among my curiosities. I do not think I shall write such verses at eighty-one. Saturday I had a comfortable dinner with my dear Mrs. Boscawen. She is transported with the bishop's verses. I wish he had had a better subject; but, like Swift, Rochester, and other wits, he was resolved, I suppose, to show how well he could write on nothing.

On Friday evening I went to Mr. Tighe's, to hear him read Jephson's tragedy. "Praise," says Dr. Johnson, "is the tribute which every man is expected to pay for the grant of perusing a manuscript," and indeed I could praise without hurting my conscience, for the "Count of Narbonne" has considerable merit; the language is very poetical, and parts of the fable very interesting; the plot managed with art, and the characters well drawn. The love-scenes I think are the worst; they are prettily written, and full of flowers, but are rather cold; they have more poetry than passion. I do not mean to detract from Mr. Jephson's merit by this remark, for it does not lessen a poet's fame to say he excels more in painting the terrible than the tender passions. Think of Johnson's having apartments in Grosvenor Square!* but he says it is not half so convenient as Bolt Court. He has just finished the Poets; Pope is the last. I am sorry he has lost so much credit by Lord Lyttleton's; he treats him almost with contempt; makes him out a poor writer, and an envious man; speaks well only of his "Conversion of St. Paul," of which he says, "it is sufficient to say it has never been answered." Mrs. Montagu and Mr. Pepys, his two chief surviving friends, are very angry.

We spent one very agreeable day at Mrs. Delany's: her inseparable friend the Duchess-dowager of Portland was there. This charming duchess is very kind to me, and honours me with particular attention. She has invited me to spend some time in the summer at Bulstrode. Perhaps you do not know that she is Prior's "noble, lovely little Peggy." She remembers him perfectly well, and promises I shall read a quarto manuscript which he left to her father, Lord Oxford, which contains Dialogues of the Dead in the manner of Lucan.

London, 1781.

On Friday I was at a great dinner at Mrs. Middleton's; the company was numerous, it threatened therefore to be dull; but I had a great deal of agreeable conversation with the Bishop of Chester (Dr. Porteus), who is an excellent critic, and perfectly to my taste; he is, moreover, I believe, a very good man. I hope great popularity, and the estimation in which his company is held, will not spoil him, nor make him relax; it requires a steady head to stand so high without being giddy. We little folks below, that walk quietly in the vale,

* At Mr. Thrale's new house.

know nothing of the danger, and are therefore pert and censorious.

I have often said, I do not know so hard a trade as pleasure, if it be well followed. I am quite tired of visiting, and yet I do not go to a quarter of the places I am asked to. I never knew a great party turn out so pleasantly as the other night at the Pepys's. There was all the pride of London,—every wit, and every wit-ess; though these, when they get into a cluster, I have sometimes found to be as dull as other people; but the spirit of the evening was kept up on the strength of a little lemonade, till past eleven, without cards, scandal, or politics. Mrs. Boscawen threw me into no small confusion: she got among the men, not less than twenty, all beaux esprits, and gave them all, privately, Bishop Lowth's verses to read.

A very affecting circumstance happened yesterday. Mrs. Garrick and I were invited to an assembly at Mrs. Thrale's. There was to be a fine concert, and all the fine people were to be there: but the chief object was to meet the Bramin and the two Persees, and I promised myself no small pleasure in seeing the disciples of the ancient Zoroaster, for such these are, and worshippers of fire. Just as my hair was dressed came a servant to forbid our coming, for that Mr. Thrale was dead. A very few hours later and he would have died in this assembly. What an awful event! He was in the prime of life, but had the misfortune to be too rich, and to keep too sumptuous a table, at which he indulged too freely. He was a sensible and respectable man. I am glad the poor lady has in her distress such a friend as Dr. Johnson; he will suggest the best motives of consolation.

The other night we were at a very great and full assembly. My distaste of these scenes of insipid magnificence I have not words to tell. Every faculty but the sight is starved, and that has a surfeit. I like conversation-parties when they are of the right sort; and I do not care whether it be composed of four or forty persons, because if you know and like the generality of them, nothing is more easy than to pick out a snug pleasant corner; whereas it is impossible to do so when two or three hundred people are continually coming in, popping a courtesy, exhibiting their fine persons, and popping out again, or nailing themselves down to a card-table.

London, 1781.

I was last Monday at a meeting at the Bishop of St. Asaph's, where were all the Brides, Duncannon, and Althorpe; and I had the pleasure of a vast deal of snug chat with the bishop, Mr. Walpole, Mrs. Montagu, and Mrs. Carter.

Mrs. Kennicott tells me Bishop Lowth insists upon my publishing "Sensibility," and all my other poems together, immediately, that people may have them all together. The Dean of Gloucester has sent me his book against Locke, splendidly

bound. I have not yet had the manners to write and thank him for it. I am afraid it will draw upon him a number of enemies and answers, which at his time of life cannot be very agreeable. I believe where the spirit of controversy has once possessed the mind, no time can weaken it.

I was on Monday night at a very snug little party at Mr. Ramsay's. He has written an Essay on the Harmony of Numbers and Versification. He wished me to hear it read, and convened a small party of wits. It is scientific and ingenious, but I do not allow him his positions, and very pertly told him so, for he seems to set written rules above the "nicely judging ear," which I will never allow; and he denies Pope to have been an excellent harmonist, which I will never allow neither. On Friday I dined at Mrs. Boscawen's, only we two. We had a snug day, and a deal of that social cordial chat that is so preferable to all the mummery of great parties. At eight I went to Lady ——'s large assembly, which was very magnificently dull.

Tuesday we were a small and very choice party at Bishop Shipley's. Lord and Lady Spencer, Lord and Lady Althorpe, Sir Joshua, Langton, Boswell, Gibbon, and, to my agreeable surprise, Dr. Johnson were there.

Mrs. Garrick and he had never met since her bereavement. I was heartily disgusted with Mr. Boswell, who came up stairs after dinner, much disordered with wine, and addressed me in a manner that drew from me a sharp rebuke, for which I fancy he will not easily forgive me. Johnson came to see us the next morning, and made us a long visit. On Mrs. Garrick's telling him she was always more at her ease with persons who had suffered the same loss with herself, he said that was a comfort she could seldom have, considering the superiority of his merit, and the cordiality of their union. He bore his strong testimony to the liberality of Garrick. He reproved me with pretended sharpness for reading "Les Pensées de Pascal," or any of the Port Royal authors, alleging that, as a good Protestant, I ought to abstain from books written by Catholics. I was beginning to stand upon my defence, when he took me with both hands, and with a tear running down his cheeks, "Child," said he, with the most affecting earnestness, "I am heartily glad that you read pious books, by whomsoever they may be written."

Tell my father I am quite astonished at his translating Bishop Lowth's verses so well, and writing them in so good a hand.

London, 1781.

We are just returned from Hampton. I carried Belshazzar there, thinking that in such a scene of quiet and repose I should be likely to write a great deal; but the beautiful scenes of the country, especially at this time of the year, when all

nature is young and blooming, take such possession of my mind, and dissipate it so much, that I could sooner think of writing in all the bustle of London than in the still tranquillity of Hampton; I mean unless I were settled there long enough for the novelty of rural objects to wear off. The other day I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with Dr. Barnard, the very learned Provost of Eton; he answers all that I had heard of him, and no man's reputation is more high. We had a great deal of conversation, and though his first *abord* is not quite pleasing, yet I was never more entertained.

On Monday I was at Mrs. Vesey's; she had collected her party from the Baltic to the Po, for there was a Russian nobleman, an Italian virtuoso, and General Paoli. In one corner was the pleasantest group in the world; and having peeped into the various parties in both rooms, I fixed upon that which I best liked. These were the agreeable Provost of Eton, Mrs. Boscawen, Mr. Pepys, Mr. Walpole, and the Bishop of Killaloe. The conversation was quite in my way, and in a great measure within my reach; it related chiefly to poetry and criticism.

We begin now to be a little cheerful at home, and to have our small parties. One such we have just had, and the day and evening turned out very pleasant. Johnson was in full song, and I quarrelled with him sadly. I accused him of not having done justice to the "Allegro" and "Penseroso." He spoke disparagingly of both. I praised Lycidas, which he absolutely abused, adding, "if Milton had not written the Paradise Lost, he would have only ranked among the minor poets: he was a Phidias that could cut a Colossus out of a rock, but could not cut heads out of cherry-stones."*

Boswell brought to my mind the whole of a very mirthful conversation at dear Mrs. Garrick's, and my being made by Sir William Forbes the umpire in a trial of skill between Garrick and Boswell, which could most nearly imitate Dr. Johnson's manner. I remember I gave it for Boswell in familiar conversation, and for Garrick in reciting poetry. Mrs. Boscawen shone with her usual mild lustre.

Mr. Walpole has done me the honour of inviting me to Strawberry Hill; as he is said to be a shy man, I must consider this as a great compliment. I will reward you for reading this with a bon-mot of Sheridan's, upon a friend's mentioning to him the ill success of a late tragedy, which was full of mythology, and tiresome allusions to pagan deities, he answered from Oronooko, "*His own gods damn him.*"

London, 1781.

I have now put a period to my pleasurable campaign, and as we shall be in the country for the greatest part of the little

* This has probably been recorded in his Life, but is given here as being written on the day on which, and by the person to whom, it was said.

time we have left, I have refused to make any more engagements; indeed I am quite tired of assemblies and conversation-parties, and long for *disengagement* (if there be such a word) and leisure. We dined at Mrs. Wilmot's the other day, and the Provost of Eton entertained me much with his wit and humour.

On Monday we had a farewell-party at Mrs. Vesey's, where we were a little sad to think how many of us might never meet again, particularly poor Mrs. Vesey herself, who is going to Ireland, at an advanced age, and in bad health. It was a very choice party. Mr. Burke came and sat next me for an hour. I complained of my false countrymen, and he repeated my epitaph in Radcliff church. I was astonished that he had not forgotten it. The Bishop of Chester was on my other hand, and the conversation was kept up with great liveliness. I asked the bishop if he thought he should carry his bill against Sunday amusements through both houses. Burke said he believed it would go through *their* house, though his *pious friend Wilkes* opposed it with all his might. Oriental Jones was with us; but he is one of those great geniuses whom it is easier to read than to hear; for whenever he speaks, it is with seeming reluctance, though master of many languages.

I am just come in from paying morning visits to two deans, Carlisle and Gloucester. On Tuesday, Mrs. Boscawen carried me to Glanvilla; we had the pleasantest tête-à-tête day imaginable, and walked about, and sat under the spreading oak, and eat our cold chicken, and drank our tea, as happy folks are wont to do.

We have made no visit of length, except one to the Duchess-dowager of Portland, which was very pleasant, for she has much knowledge, and her attractions owe nothing to her rank.

CHAPTER II.

HANNAH MORE returned as usual to Bristol, in June, 1781, but was at this time accompanied by her friend Mrs. Garrick, who spent a month with her sisters; and in the December of the same year, 1781, she again became an inmate with Mrs. G. at Hampton, from whence her first letter to one of her family is dated.

Hampton, Dec. 24, 1781.

Poor Ayrey dropped down dead a few days ago! he was the only atheist I ever knew; but what I thought particularly argued a wrong judgment in him was this, that he was an honest, good-natured man, which certainly he should not have

been on his principles. He was a fatalist, and if he snuffed the candle, or stirred the fire, or took snuff, he solemnly protested he was compelled to do it; and it did not depend on his own discretion whether he should buckle his shoe or tie his garter. If I had not known him well, I would not have believed there had existed such a character. He always confessed he was a coward, and had a natural fear of pain and death, though he knew he should be as if he had never been. I cannot think of him without horror and compassion. He knows by this time whether a future state was really such a ridiculous invention of priestcraft and superstition as he always said it was.

I met at dinner the other day, at Mrs. Boscawen's, Lady Smith; she is dowager of the pious lord-chief-baron, really an excellent good woman, though a little uncharitable in her opinions about others; she said my friend was the best *natural* woman she had ever known.

The Dean of Gloucester to Miss H. More.

Bristol, April, 25, 1782.

My dear Miss,

I informed you wrongly when I said that our little philosopher was at Oxford. He and his father went there on Thursday; he was matriculated the next day, and then set out part of his way to Bristol. Here he staid twelve days before I had any tidings of him; therefore it was natural for me to conclude that he was still at Oxford. When he called on me, I congratulated him on his return from the university, and was rather surprised to find that his stay at Oxford had been so short, and in Bristol so long, before I had heard from him. His answer was, that he had resided with his father at Hannam the greater part of the time. He, his father, and *Friend Rick* of Bath spent the evening with me; his conversation was, as usual, a mixture of great sense, which discovered uncommon parts and learning, with a tincture of nonsense of the most extravagant kind. I find it true what I had been informed concerning him, that he believes in witches and apparitions, as well as in judicial astrology. And though he bears the raillery very well, and joins in it with a good grace, yet I do not find that any thing that can be said has any influence to make him change his opinion.

Should all other schemes fail, you and your female friends at Oxford have it in your power to make him as rich as a nabob, by giving out that he is the *true original conjurer* whom Shakspeare consulted on all occasions when he introduced witches; and that he has made so many voyages to the stars since that time, that there is not a Madam *Hotspur* throughout the kingdom whose fortune he could not tell at the shortest notice. A handsome genteel set of apartments somewhere

about St. James's, with a white wand and a long artificial beard, would be all the accoutrements necessary (with such good assistance) to set him up in high life above stairs and below. Such a hint might be improved upon, and a female genius is particularly happy in the necessary embellishments on such occasions.

My own scheme is of a much humbler nature, and as I have no acquaintance with the stars, I am content with sublunary things. I wish to set this eccentric genius on some work that might fix his attention, yet be pleasant to himself, as well as useful to the public. Perhaps also his knowledge of the learned languages is not so critical and exact as it ought to be. For these reasons I wish him to undertake the translation of four little pieces of Xenophon, his Athenian Polity, Spartan Polity, the Exploits (or what the French would call the Campaigns) of Agesilaus, and a short treatise concerning foxes. The translation ought to be as literal as possible; the Greek language admitting of an English dress much better than any other. Were the original Greek printed in opposite columns, and short dissertations to be added to the end of each tract, explaining their several excellences and defects, and setting forth how far such schemes or systems might be an improvement, if copied into modern governments, and in what respects inadmissible; such a publication in a pocket volume would do honour to our philosopher, and be of use to various kinds of young students. You and your friend Mrs. Carter could lend him some assistance in the finer and more brilliant part of the work; and perhaps I might help him a little forward in the duller and less entertaining. Such was the project I had conceived, but I believe that disappointment will be my fate, in common with other projectors. Our little friend, I fear, is too volatile to fix to one point. *Your* commands would have a better effect than any suggestion or remonstrance of mine.

Just before your favour arrived, I received a letter, which gave me some hopes of being able to get a lodging somewhere near the park. My good-natured jolly Blouzabelle has made herself so necessary to me by the assiduity of her attendance, that I cannot consent to her absence for a day; and she will want to take a little walk, and have some fresh air in a morning, when you, and *people of your ton*, are in your first slumbers. She desires to join in most respectful compliments to Miss More, with,

My dear miss,
Your most obliged and humble servant,
J. Tucker.

Mrs. Kennicott to Miss H. More.

Oxford, 1782.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I have the vanity to think you did not want the many unpleasant circumstances you met with in your journey from us, to increase your partiality for the place and persons you had quitted.

We tried one evening at the thread-paper verses, and they agreed with their name but too literally, for they were only fit to wrap thread in. Sentimental cards *lived* one night longer (I should rather say *languished*), and then died a natural death, though we called in a physician to their assistance. In short, it requires much more wit than people are apt to imagine, to be foolish; and you are more nearly related to Falstaff than you care to own.

Miss Adams has left us for a week. The Pembroke family were much obliged by the kind manner in which you speak of them, and send to you their affectionate compliments and good wishes. Pray do not show your resentment of the Dean of Gloucester's want of gallantry by going to the patriots; see what lengths they run; I should not like to visit even *you* in the Tower.

The vice-chancellor and Mrs. Horne say true and handsome things of you. Dr. K. and I have read King Hezekiah's reflections with all the malice you could wish us to exercise. We think the lines sweetly pretty, but we doubt whether there is not more of the spirit of Christianity in them than ought to be put into Hezekiah's mouth. Is it probable he had so settled a belief in the general judgment? If it is to be a soliloquy in the drama, may it not be a little shortened? You see what carping critics you have committed yourself to; and when you go to town, if you would take us in your way, and spend a week with us, we would in that week show you more ill-nature than you will meet with in a month in any other family.

I know of but one man who would make a good tutor for Henderson. I think if your friend Dr. Johnson had the shaking him about, he would shake out his nonsense, and set his sense a working. He wants somebody to come with authority, and say, Sir, you know a great deal, but there is a great deal you are still ignorant of, concerning which, if you do not take pains to inform yourself, what you already know will be of mighty little use to you in your progress through this world. I spent a few hours with Dr. Johnson about a fortnight since; he did not talk much, but I was so delighted with what he did say, that I wished him to have talked incessantly. I believe we should have had more from him, but he was too deaf to hear the general conversation.

The Bishop of London* insists upon your publishing *Sensibility*, and other matters which he is sure you have by you, and re-publishing all your former publications, so that people may have them all together, in two or more volumes. He says people had not to hunt for Lady Sulpitia's works in quarto, octavo, and duodecimo, but they were all handsomely brought together.

Here I have been told over and over again of the polite, elegant, judicious letter Miss H. More wrote to the Dean of Gloucester, and how the dean boasted of it. What a cross-patch you were not to let me see it.

When you are quite at leisure, I shall be greatly obliged to you for your *Sensibility*, but do not send it till it be perfectly convenient. I have enough of my own for present use; part of it is always called forth when I recollect the pleasure I received from your visit.

Dr. K. sends you his kind compliments. The gout keeps off, and the work goes on. Mr. ——, too, begs to be remembered to you, and he gave me a pretty turned compliment for you, but I cannot get it into my paper.

Yours very affectionately,

A. KENNICOTT.

Hampton, Jan. 17, 1782.

How does poor wretched Louisa?† You have not sent me the "Halfpenny Tale of Wo" which I wrote; it may be of use in procuring subscriptions. Mrs. Garrick and I go to London before Wednesday. She to her mass, and I to my mantuamaker—she to be daubed with ashes, and I to be decorated with vanities. And now we are upon vanities, what do you think is the reigning mode as to powder?—only turmeric, that coarse die which stains yellow. The Goths and Vandals, the Picts and Saxons are come again. It falls out of the hair, and stains the skin so that every pretty lady must look as yellow as a crocus, which I suppose will become a

* Doctor Lowth.

† This alludes to a beautiful insane young creature who was found under a haystack near Bristol. She occasionally betrayed herself to be a foreigner, it was supposed a German; and always showed unequivocal symptoms of being a high-bred gentlewoman. Every care was taken to discover how she got to Bristol, or who she was, but in vain. All the ladies in the neighbourhood were kind in supplying her necessities for nearly three years, during which time she never could be enticed into a house, for she said "*men* dwelt there." It was very desirable that she should be supported comfortably in a private madhouse, for which end Miss H. More was extremely active in procuring subscriptions from her friends to second her own efforts in her behalf. Among those who were most struck by this affecting incident, and who contributed most largely, were Lord and Lady Bathurst; and by these benevolent exertions, a fund was raised sufficient to place this poor maniac in a very respectable private madhouse near Bristol, under the superintendence of the Misses More, where every possible endeavour was used (but without effect) to restore her. She afterward died at Grey's Hospital.

better compliment than as white as a lily. I have just made a very important discovery in poetical antiquities, which I hereby make a present of to all the commentators upon Virgil, every one of whom it has escaped; it is this—that the dish the wandering Trojans ate first on the Latian shore was a flap-jack; it could be nothing else, and the pretty childish remark of that great hungry boy Master Ascanias (that they had eaten their tables) means nothing more than that they devoured the bottom crust on which the apples were baked. I hope you will allow there is a great critical acumen, and much recondite learning, in this remark, which I think will pass muster with some of Warburton's.

I yesterday returned Mr. Strachan the last proof of my book, I suppose it will be out in a few days, though I do not know when, nor do I even know what is to be the price. I am generally in the dark about my own affairs, because I hate to plague people with letters and inquiries. I trust all to Cadell's prudence. I have desired him to charge it as low as he can. I actually feel very awkward about this new book. Strangers who read it will, I am afraid, think I am good; and I would not willingly appear better than I am, which is certainly the case with all who do not act as seriously as they write. I think sometimes of what Prior makes Solomon say of himself in his fallen state—"They brought my proverbs to confute my life."

Adelphi, Feb. 17, 1782.

I met yesterday, at Mrs. ——'s, the Bishop of Chester and Mrs. Porteus. The bishop inquired very much when the book* was to appear, to my no small confusion, for the reason I am going to give. The book lay on Mrs. Boscawen's table, and we had first discovered a most ridiculous blunder, for, by the misplacing of a single asterism, the bishop is made a painter, and Sir Joshua Reynolds a bishop. Neither Mrs. B. nor I had courage to mention this, so I very foolishly only said, I could not tell when it would be published. I have sent the history of this blunder to Cadell, and with a dash of a pen it is tolerably rectified.

After all, the kindest thing to my friends is *not* to send them a book, for a present from the author is very inconvenient, as I have often found to my cost; since it forces the persons so distinguished to write against their conscience, and to praise what perhaps they secretly despise. Besides, as I mentioned all my poetical friends, it would be rather awkward, after offering the incense, to thrust the censer in their faces.

* Sacred Dramas; with the Poem on Sensibility in the same volume. The work has passed through nineteen editions.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss. More.

Glanvilla, 1782.

What says my dear Miss More? That she has addressed her charming poem of "Sensibility" to one who has not a grain of that pleasing, painful quality; and that, if ever she writes upon stupidity, she will with more propriety direct to the same quarter. No! my dear madam, do not think so, silence does not always mean insensibility; as mine has appeared long, considering what cause you gave me to speak, believe me it was not from my being insensible to your partiality and kindness, or to the pleasure of having my beloved epistle restored to me, but merely to the idleness of hot weather, and (what you will be glad to hear of) to the satisfaction of having had a little visit from the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort. His grace took me on his march to Warley camp at the head of his Monmouth men, and very fine men they were. You do not say a word in your letter of any projected march eastward; and yet, my dear madam (besides that it is the very error of the moon to march and countermarch), did not you promise me that you should find means to make a visit to my cottage in your way to the northern part of England? Pray let me hear a little more of this in your next. All this month I mean to remain here, and shall have the *great cabin* vacant; and even after that I will make my engagements bend a little to your conveniency, whenever you give me hopes of seeing you here. Meantime, whom do you think I have got under my roof at this moment? not the queen nor the princess royal, but the rare, the venerable Mrs. Delany; nor can I attempt to describe how amiable she is. As yet there appears no sign of her leaving the century which she adorns, and which you know she keeps pace with.

You may be sure that I was too proud of "Sensibility," as well as too mindful of your commands, not to carry it to La Casa Burrows, as you desired. I see this sweet poem is altered, but I do not know exactly how: when I have the pleasure of seeing you I shall be glad to study the various readings. Now for Mrs. Livesen—she has acquitted herself *en charme*. She came and spent her day with me two or three times a week, returning at night, till at length she became so *great* a lady, that I told her it was *trop d'honneur*, and begged her to decline it. *Elle se le tint pour dit*, and in a very few days, having nothing else to do, produced a prodigious fine boy quietly in her own house, and not on Highgate-hill, as I had apprehended; and I continue to receive the most satisfactory testimonials that all is going on perfectly well.

Quant a la lecture, summer is not favourable to it; we have read a little of "*La Vie privée de Louis Quinze*," a melancholy picture of private vice and public misery; it put me too upon

looking over Voltaire's "*Guerre de quarante un*," from which much of it is copied. I should like after this to read "Maria Theresa," it would come in very well; Louis Quinze was her bitter enemy, at least acted as such, and spoiled all the pacific system of his pacific minister Fleury, who died in his harness at ninety. Can one imagine a man after seventy living twenty years first minister of France? We have been reading Mr. Warton, but we have been so idle as not to have yet finished him. Adieu, my dear friend, let me hear from you soon, and always believe me,

Yours, very affectionately,

F. B.

From the same to the same.

Glanvilla, 1782.

Truth to tell, my dear friend, I thought your letter long in coming, for I was anxious to know whether you were well, and your journey had been prosperous. Now that I am satisfied in these respects, I have given my quarrel to the winds, only making this observation, that since you have hardly found time to write a single line, somebody has lost by it, and I should name myself if the plural number did not rather present itself to my pen. I have read a motto on a coach, "Non pro se sed pro patria" (is that Latin?)—I lament then *pro patria* when you do not write, as well as *pro myself*.

Ever since this month began I have been stationed here in much quietness and leisure. Miss Sayer (who is with me) reads Gibbon every evening while I make nets; but this evening I have banished him, determined to converse with my dear friend, and indeed it is no sacrifice; many a book have I read which I like much better than this thick quarto; indeed in some parts I am much offended; but when once one has begun, it is a sort of gageure to go on.

How opportunely has my coachman just arrived with a packet from Audley-street! I have this moment torn it open with eagerness, devoured it with more, my own dear "Sensibility!" The addition of so many guests I cannot but like; everybody likes to be in good company. I would not suppress one line or one letter of your incomparable friend. Alas! shall sensibility be your theme, and shall you not tell how much it has cost you? Indeed the most insensible (could such be supposed to have *such* a friend) must have been alive to so great a loss, for never shall we behold his like again! As to your venerable prelate,* you alone can decide of the propriety; I have not the honour or advantage to know him, and cannot advise: I am sure the lines are excellent, and the gift of poetry (if I may so speak) is so rare, that few have ever dis-

* Bishop Lowth.

claimed or been ashamed of their excelling in it, for "where virtue is, these are most virtuous;" besides, it is to his youth you ascribe these charming powers, and you make them an offering, and sacrifice to higher pursuits: still, if he should have any objections (which I do not foresee) you will easily come at them, I imagine. You know how Voltaire despises Congreve, for disclaiming his poetical talents; but Voltaire, you will say, is, in his principles, the exact antipode to Lowth. Certainly; but, if I mistake not, there is upon my shelves, upon everybody's shelves (for it is Dodsley's Collection), a very pretty ballad of this great prelate's *making*, and with his name to it, so, though he has renounced the muse, he cannot disown her, only now

"He does his voice inspire,
Who touched Isaiah's hallowed lips with fire."

My dear friend, you bid me criticise, and nothing can be kinder than the full power you give me over this charming poem, for now it is so absolutely such, that I am quite ashamed to occupy any part of it; though while it was an epistle to a friend, an effusion of friendship (to use a more poetical, not to say affected, term), I was very proud to show it to a few.

Adieu, dear friend, and be assured I am most affectionately

Yours,

F. B.

P.S.—Lady Chatham sent to desire I would spend a day with her, and we passed it tête-à-tête. I hope it was some relief to my afflicted friend, who has lost two children within half a year; you may believe I was not insensible to her affliction.

From the same to the same.

1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

They are come out! the books I mean; I have found them just now in the hall, a packet from Mr. Cadell; I had them brought up. "I put in my thumb and pulled out a plumb;" viz. I drew out one all sewed in yellow, as I directed, and while Ayre is cutting the leaves very carefully, I hope, I sit down to write to the founder of this feast. I have looked only at two pages, the first and the last. In the first I found my dear duchess most handsomely inscribed and transmitted to posterity. In the last I read "one hero more," that hero should be a hero in philosophy; *il est devenu content, et moi aussi.*

But now to your first letter.—You are so afraid that strangers will think you good. Is it *you*, my dear friend, who say that? read the 16th verse of the fifth chapter of the

Gospel of St. Matthew. When they read your dramas they will think you good. I am not *afraid* so, I *hope* so, else I am sure they must think you a hypocrite; there is but that alternative, for "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh," and if you can *so speak*, and not out of an honest and good heart, *tant pis pour vous;* but I never yet suspected that any one could bring "your proverbs to confute your life."

The ancient and pleasant Jenynses spent a day with me, and not having been out of London for some months, were delighted and delightful. Adieu, my dear madam, I have called for my *Livre Jaune*, I hope it is cut by this time, and if so you will not wonder that I cannot say a word more, but that I am ever yours,

F. B.

From the same to the same.

Badminton, 1782.

"Boast we not a More!" so says the theatre at Bristol, with peculiar propriety and emphasis. The learned cells of Oxford inscribe their acknowledgment of her authority. But I claim her as my friend, yet I say nothing to her, though I almost breathe the same air. Yes, my dear friend, I have been here this fortnight past, without finding a moment to say a word to you, though we talk of Bristol—of Bristol post—of Bristol feasts—and here was the Bishop of Bristol at our breakfast the other day. But do I then want mementoes? No, indeed, but I want leisure amid seven grandchildren, &c. &c. However, I think of you continually, and at last the result of these thoughts was a resolution that I would write to you by the post to-night, *coute qui coute;* and here I am at a little table apart in the library, but in very good company, viz. the Duke of Beaufort, the Duchess, Lord Worcester, Lord Charles Somerset, Dr. Penny, and Mr. Price of *Oxenford, Librarian.* Happily all these respectable personages are occupied in inspecting some of the treasures of this immense library; but from time to time they interrupt their studies to discourse; so that my letter is not likely to be correct, nor do you require that it should. The other day the duchess carried me to visit a young lady, her neighbour, to whom I saw her grace present a book most elegantly bound, and desire the lady's acceptance of it, saying, she believed she would like it exceedingly. What book think you this was? What should it be but Sacred Dramas. I have just told her that I am writing to you; she begs me to send her best compliments. Dr. Penny also presents his.

As to our ingenious speculatist Lord Monboddo, he is returned on his galloping nag to Scotland. He wrote me, *chemin faisant*, from Manchester, a very polite letter, and I have at last

thanked him for it, but I doubt it was at the end of six weeks; however, he is well off that I did not cry after him "Stop thief," for he carried with him all Miss More's works which I had lent him. The Sacred Dramas I would have given him with all my heart; but of the plays I was proud enough to send him those that had the honourable mark "From the author." His books will never be read, but that is no amends for depriving me of mine.

Mr. Seward, who came to dine with us the other day, gave me a better account of Dr. Johnson's health than you do. It was Mr. S. who devised his journey to Oxford, as likely to please and amuse him, and by so doing to amend his health and recover his spirits. I do not wonder that you were both pleased with the portrait over the chimney, and the inscription.* When I read your account of it I felt highly interested too, and pleased.

"Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?"

For must not all these heads of houses and right learned clerks know that there is such a little body as Frances Boscawen, who can taste Miss More, and whom Miss More esteems? I am about to return on my steps, and shall hope to meet a letter from you when I reach home. Good night, dear friend, believe me always,

Your very affectionate,

F. B.

From H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Bath, Dec. 23.

MY DEAR MADAM,

"Les morts n'ecrivent point," says Madame de Maintenon. And yet Mrs. Rowe, who was, *I opine*, a much better Christian (albeit a little too fanciful), has flatly contradicted this assertion, by *making* them write. However maugre my veneration for the English lady, I beg, my dear madam, that you will be pleased to adopt the assertion of the French one, "que les morts n'ecrivent point," and for the same reason too, namely, "que je me contois de leur nombre."

You see, my dear madam, the extent of your influence over me. "Go to Bath," said you, "if you have a return of your complaint." To Bath I came, et me voiçi retablie! But I do not at all like this foolish frivolous place, and shall leave it as soon as the nymph of the spring permits.

Being here naturally reminds me to speak of Mrs. Macaulay.

* A line from "Sensibility" (which poem was inscribed to Mrs. Boscawen), placed over Dr. Johnson's portrait in Pembroke College.

I feel myself extremely scandalized at her conduct, and yet I did not esteem her; I knew her to be absurd, vain, and affected, but never could have suspected her of the indecent and, I am sorry to say, profligate turn which her late actions and letters have betrayed. The men do so rejoice and so exult, that it is really provoking: yet have they no real cause for triumph; for this woman is far from being any criterion by which to judge of the whole sex; she was not feminine either in her writings or her manners; she was only a good, clever man. Did I ever tell you, my dear madam, an answer her daughter once made me? Desirous, from civility, to take some notice of her, and finding she was reading Shakspeare, I asked her if she was not delighted with many parts of King John? "I never read the *kings*, ma'am," was the truly characteristic reply.

I have got Lowth's Isaiah. It appears to me to be a work of great labour and erudition; but better calculated for scholars than plain Christians, as the notes are rather critical than devotional. The bishop, however, is an admirable writer. His book *De Sacra Poesi* is a treasure, and has taught me to consider the Divine Book it illustrates under many new and striking points of view; it teaches to appreciate the distinct and characteristic excellence of the sacred poets and historians, in a manner wonderfully entertaining and instructive.

My very agreeable friend Mrs. Kennicott has strongly recommended to me a thing just published by Dr. Glasse, from the French. It is called, "A Lady of Quality's Advice to her Children," &c. The author seems to have known perfectly the human heart, and to have despised the world from a full conviction of its nothingness, upon a thorough acquaintance with it.

I have just been running over the Posthumous Letters of Shenstone and his correspondents, and I think them the worst collection that ever was published with real names; I must except those of the Duchess of Somerset; they are but few, but they breathe a spirit of genuine piety and sterling sense. Do not you, my dear madam, find something touching in a *real* correspondence, however indifferently executed? To see a commerce of affection carried on between a set of persons from their youth, when all is gay and smiling; then to have the same people arriving at the next period, when they are the slaves of care, of vexation, and of disappointment; and then to watch them fall one by one, through the broken arches of the bridge of life, till, perhaps, but one is left of the social set; and surely in this case, "*it is the survivor dies*,"—last of all, he himself falls, and you are told in a note, perhaps, "that this ingenious gentleman, just as he attained some important point which had been the object of his ambition, or reached the summit of his wishes by the possession of an ample fortune—*died*." Whether this will have the honour to kiss your hands in town,

or whether you were tempted to Badminton by your beloved duchess, I know not; but this I know, that I am with perfect respect, dearest madam,

Ever yours,

H. More.

From H. More to her sister.

London, 1782.

The word *sacred* in the title is a damper to the dramas. It is tying a millstone about the neck of Sensibility, which will drown them both together. I was one night at a large blue-stocking party, at the Bishop of St. Asaph's. All the old set were there that death and sickness have spared, with the addition of the Bishop of Peterborough (Hinchliffe).

Bishop Lowth has just finished the Dramas, and sent me word, that although I have paid him the most swinging compliment he ever received, he likes the whole book more than he can say. But the Bishop of Chester's compliment was most solid: he said he thought it would do a vast deal of *good*, and that is the praise best worth having. Well, I think I have said enough for myself now, or I could treat you with some more fine things from other quarters, and which I believe as little as those who utter them; so there is no harm done on my part at least, for I had neither the guilt of falsehood nor the weakness of credulity.

Mrs. Montagu, Chapone, and Carter are mightily pleased that I have attacked that mock-feeling and sensibility which is at once the boast and disgrace of these times, and which is equally deficient in taste and truth. Ask Dr. Stonehouse if he has read "Cardiphonia," by Mr. Newton of Olney. There is in it much vital religion, and much of the experience of a good Christian, who feels and laments his own imperfections and weaknesses. I am up to the ears in books. I have just finished six volumes of Jortin's sermons; elegant, but cold, and very low in doctrine,—"plays round the head, but comes not to the heart." Cardiphonia does; I like it much, though not every sentiment or expression it contains. I have almost gone through three very thick quartoes of Mr. Gibbon's History of the Lower Empire; a fine but insidious narrative of a dull period: this I read aloud every day from dinner to tea. It is melancholy to observe the first corruptions of Christianity in the fourth century, and I never rise from the book but sad and disgusted. Gibbon is a malignant painter, and though he does give the likeness of depraved Christianity, he magnifies deformities, and takes a profane delight in making the picture as hideous as he can. Indeed, in the last two volumes he has taken some pains to hide the cloven foot; but whenever a Christian emperor, or bishop of established reputation, is brought forward, his encomiums have so much coldness, and his praises so much

sneer, that you cannot help discovering contempt where he professes panegyric: but of all the birds in the air, who do you think is his favourite?—the strict and rigid Athanasius! Of all the saints, and all the fathers, I should never have guessed he would have been the object of Mr. Gibbon's applause. Julian, you may naturally suppose, is the man after his own heart; I xpected it would be so. He is more decent on the subject of Constantine's conversion than I expected; though indeed I should be very sorry that the truth of the Christian religion hung by so slender a thread as that miracle. However, I am now plunging into other studies than the disputes of Arius and his antagonists, with which my head has been filled, and am pleasantly engaged to spend the evening with Æneas, at Evander's rustic banquet; which, however, I shall not half enjoy, because I know that my favourite Pallas will be killed before I go to bed.

From the same to the same.

London, 1782.

I spent an evening last week at Dr. Kennicott's, with the new Provost of Eton and Mrs. Roberts. I have a certain awkwardness about me, which I have never yet been able to get rid of; it is, that I can never congratulate any man on honours and dignities which fall to him by the death of another. I tried to wish Dr. Roberts joy, but could not do it; I do not much wonder at it indeed in this particular case, because I was very fond of Dr. Barnard, and have received a thousand attentions from him. However, I am glad, for the sake of so many of my friends who are connected with him, that Dr. Roberts is made provost. He is a good poet, and a respectable man, an appendage which does not always belong to a good poet. *Tant pis.* On Wednesday I dined at Lady Middleton's with Mrs. Carter, &c. I was quite flattered with the many cordial things good Jonas Hanway said to me about the Dramas. He told me he had sat down to read them with fear and trembling, as he had persuaded himself it was taking an undue liberty with the Scriptures; but he had no sooner finished them, than he ran off to the bookseller, bought three or four, and went to a great boarding-school where he has some little friends. He gave the governess the book, and told her it was part of her duty to see that all her girls studied it thoroughly.

I spent the evening at Dr. Kennicott's. Among other company was Mythology Bryant, who is as pleasant as he is learned. We have since dined together at Mrs. Montagu's, and are become great friends. He "bears his faculties so meekly," and has such simplicity of manners, that I take to him as I did to Hermes Harris, whom everybody must regret [redacted] had the pleasure and advantage of knowing him. Only Bryant is the pleasanter man. He told me an amusing anecdote of one of

the little princes. He had been that morning to Windsor to present his book. He was met in the ante-chamber by the youngest of them, who begged to look at it. When it was put into his hands, he held it upside down, and glancing his eyes for a moment over the pages, returned it with an air of important graciousness, pronouncing it—excellent!

We have been a few days at Hampton, from whence we returned yesterday: the weather was unpleasant, and windy enough, yet I contrived to be out of doors the greatest part of the time; it does me a vast deal of good to go for a few days into pure air, after being smoke-dried in this "scene of sin and sea-coal."

I dined to-day at Apsley House. I was exceedingly diverted with my lord-chancellor, who, the minute he saw me, cried out, "Well, what do they say? is the minister to go out?" I could not help saying, he put me in mind of Sir Robert Walpole, who, on being asked the same question, replied, "I really do not know; I have not read the papers."

The next day I was at Bishop Barrington's; he is a delightful man; the more I know of him the more I like him; quite the man of breeding, with great sense and piety. I am told they spend good part of their fortune in acts of charity. I also met your new bishop, Dr. Bagot. A thought to the memory of his unburied predecessor filled my mind, while everybody was congratulating him on his new honours. He is a good man; of exact morals, and has a great deal of that charity which giveth her goods to the poor, but not quite so much of that which consists in tenderness to the opinions of others. I dined another day with Dr. ——; he had not read my book, which saved me from a violent quarrel; for you may guess how great his dislike must be to a book which begins with praising Milton, and ends with praising God.

I breakfasted with Miss Hamilton the other morning at St. James's. There was only dear Mrs. Carter, and a very agreeable nobleman. Miss H. told the queen she expected me, and she charged her with all manner of handsome and flattering messages, desiring me above all things to pursue the same path, and to go on by writing a sacred drama upon the history of Joseph.

Hampton, 1782.

When I was in town last week, we had another *last* breakfast at St. James's. There I found Lord Monboddo, Mrs. Carter, that pleasantest of the peerage Lord Stormont, and Count Marechale, a very agreeable foreign nobleman, and a worthy man: he has almost promised to put the story of our poor insane Louise into German for me. I was three times with Mrs. Montag[redacted] week I staid in town. We spent one evening with her and Miss Gregory alone, to take leave of the Hill-street house; and you never saw such an air of ruin and bank-

ruptcy as every thing around us wore. We had about three feet square of carpet, and that we might all put our feet upon it we were obliged to sit in a circle in the middle of the room, just as if we were playing at hunt-the-slipper. She was full of encomiums of Bristol, and of every one she saw there. She is now settled in Portman-square, where I believe we were among the first to pay our compliments to her. I had no conception of any thing so beautiful. To all the magnificence of a very superb London house is added the scenery of a country retirement. It is so seldom that any thing superb is pleasant, that I was extremely struck with it. I could not help looking with compassion on the amiable proprietor *shivering at a breeze;* and who can at the best enjoy it so very little a while. She has, however, my ardent wishes for her continuance in a world to which she is an ornament and a blessing.

On Sunday I breakfasted at the Bishop of Chester's, and after a couple of hours' good conversation, they took me to the chapel royal, where he preached: "as I know committee men, and committee men know me," I was of course well accommodated; else it is but a disagreeable place to go to, for it takes up almost all the day to go to church once, and there is more music, and more bustle, and more staring than I like. The king and queen both looked very pale; and then the sermon, which I should have blamed in a village, was very well suited to a court. It was an eloquent and able vindication of Christianity: the text, "For the Jews seek a sign," &c. They were so kind as to ask me to eat some orthodox beef and pudding with them, which I declined.

At a party the other day I was placed next General Paoli, and as I have not spoken seven sentences of Italian these seven years, I had not that facility in expressing myself which I used to have; I therefore begged hard to carry on the conversation in French. By-the-by, I believe I never told you that Paoli is my chief beau and flirt this winter. We talk whole hours. He has a general good taste in the belles-lettres, and is fond of reciting passages from Dante and Ariosto. He is extremely lively when set a-going; quotes from Shakspeare, and raves in his praise. He is particularly fond of Romeo and Juliet, I suppose because the scene is laid in Italy. I did not know he had such very agreeable talents, but he will not talk in English, and his French is mixed with Italian. He speaks no language with purity.

On Monday I was at a very great assembly at the Bishop of St. Asaph's. Conceive to yourself one hundred and fifty or two hundred people met together, dressed in the extremity of the fashion; painted as red as bacchanals; poisoning the air with perfumes; treading on each other's gowns; making the crowd they blame; not one in ten able to get a chair; protesting they are engaged to ten other places, and lamenting the fatigue they are not obliged to endure; ten or a dozen card

tables crammed with dowagers of quality, grave ecclesiastics, and yellow admirals; and you have an idea of an assembly. I never go to these things when I can possibly avoid it, and stay, when there, as few minutes as I can.

Hampton, 1782.

The verses I enclose were written in consequence of a little accident that happened at an oyster club, consisting of about half a dozen learned men and two or three ladies. I think them neatly turned. It is no small compliment that I have had lately three sprightly copies of verses from three of the gravest men in England, whom posterity will hardly believe to have written epigrams. Before we left the supper-table, Dr. Horne slipped a piece of paper into my hand, upon which I observed he had been writing, concealing it under the table.

"To Bamber Gascoigne, Esq., on his having accidentally overturned a cruet of vinegar and oil upon a gauze apron of Miss Hannah More's, alluding to the good temper with which she laughed off the accident.

"Like Hannibal why dost thou come
With vinegar prepared?
As if the gentle Hannah's heart
Like Alpine rocks were hard.

"All sharp and poignant as thou art,
The acid meets a foil,
Obedient still to nature's law,
Superior floats the oil."

I believe I shall soon be as bad, or I should rather say as good, as my melancholy friend; for the follies, and distresses, and vices of this town, especially of the great world, throw a gloom over and sadden the spirit of pleasure in society. I hear of nothing but politics, destruction, and despair, and those who grumble are such excellent calculators, that I believe their morals, estates, and constitutions will be knocked up much at the same time with their country. I find the general character and dispositions of the town grow worse every winter, and then they talk of the taxes, and the high price of sugar and pepper, as if *they* were the only source of all the evils we suffer.

I am diverted with the conjectures which are formed of my principles from the Dramas. Some say I am a mystic, because I make Hezekiah talk of the highest of his claims to mercy being founded on *indulgence* and not *reward*.

London, 1782.

I made my visit to Apsley House on Wednesday. The lord-chancellor was particularly kind and friendly, and gave me a pressing invitation to dine there the next day, or any other

day when he could get disengaged from the cabinet; but charged me never to come when he had any engagement abroad. On Saturday I dined with the patriots at Bishop Shipley's. You may be sure they were in high spirits at so large a division in the House of Commons. Indeed, I could not help rejoicing with them at any event that bids fair to put an end to this ill-omened war.

London, April 7, 1782.

I met Mr. Hosier in the Strand a few days ago, and as he promised to call on me to-morrow morning to take any thing I might have to send, I will try to get a few lines ready for him. I have been very well of my complaint since I wrote last, but my mind has not been in so good a state as my body, which you will readily imagine, if you happened to remark a shocking paragraph in last Thursday's paper.

The dreadful calamity which has overtaken one of the most amiable men I ever knew has occupied our minds and hearts so much, that we have not been able to write, visit, or do any thing else. Chamberlayne! the amiable, the accomplished, the virtuous, the religious Chamberlayne! in the full vigour of his age, high in reputation, happy in his prospects and in his connexions,—honours and emoluments courting his acceptance,—in a momentary fit of phrensy, threw himself out of the Treasury window, was taken up alive, and lived thirty-six hours in the most perfect possession of his mental activity, his religion, and his reasoning faculties. The spine was broken, so that he lost all sensation, and was dead all that time below the throat, having not the least symptom of feeling or life, but in his head, which was clear and perfect. Judge what the dear Kennicott felt! I went to her immediately. Never did I see the power of the Christian religion so manifested. She divided her attendance between this beloved brother and her poor sick husband, and went backward and forward, from one house to the other, not suffering a tear to fall, or a complaint to escape her. The dying man, with an astonishing composure and clearness, settled his affairs with both worlds, sent for the clerks, did Treasury business, settled his private affairs, sent for his brother, the Provost of Eton, and desired him to pray with him. He did, and asked him if he should give him the sacrament: he said no, he had received it on Sunday; but that he had spent a very improper Good Friday, having done business with Lord Rockingham, contrary to his custom, on that day. He never seemed to feel any remorse, or to reproach his conscience with the guilt of suicide. He said his *intention* was guiltless, that it was the impulse of the moment; he was glad to die, but wished it had pleased God that it had been of a fever. Honours and riches, which are so dear to other men, had no charms for this extraordinary creature. In vain had they solicited and entreated him to

accept of this place; no, he defended himself with the most unshaken firmness. "He would be a drudge, he would labour, but he would not be conspicuous, he would not be responsible, he would not be in parliament." (I have since heard that he made all Lord North's calculations, but was so totally void of vanity that he would never appear in it.) In vain they represented to him, that he was not only hurting himself, but that it was an injury to the state to withdraw such talents from its service. In a fatal moment he at length consented to accept it, on the uncommon condition that they should *reduce* the salary. After this consent, he never had a moment's peace, and little or no sleep; this brought on a low nervous fever, but not to confine him a moment. I saw him two days before. He looked pale and eager, and talked with great disgust of his place, on my congratulating him on such an acquisition. We chatted away, however, and he grew pleasant, and we parted —never to meet again. Had you known him, you would not wonder at the universal grief his death has occasioned. To as much religion, virtue, and purity as *Griffin* possessed, he added all that the world and all that literature could give. He had the rare merit of having preserved the most unshaken integrity, the greatest tenderness of conscience, and the strongest religious principle, in all the bustle and temptation of the *great*, and all the skepticism and infidelity of the *learned* world. He was one of the politest scholars of the age. Poor Mrs. Kennicott! He was the pride of their family. On the same day, my most amiable friend Mrs. Smith departed. She wanted but little of being an angel before her death, for such a preparation and such a departure I hardly ever heard of. I heard both these dismal tidings at an assembly; you will judge whether I was able to stay at it. We went and put off all our engagements for the two or three next days, which were numerous. I had in one day the painful spectacle of two of the worthiest families I ever knew, the Burrowses and the Kennicotts, becoming two of the most wretched. Chamberlayne and the Burrowses were the most intimate friends. I left Mrs. Kennicott to go to condole with the Burrowses, on the loss of their excellent sister, but instead of comfort, carried them the additional shock of Chamberlayne's calamity. Friday I was to have gone to Mrs. Montagu's, but I was not in spirits to listen to the voice of the charmer. I went to dine where was Sir William Musgrave, the great virtuoso; and as I have not a spark of virtú in my composition, and the conversation ran on nothing else, I was allowed to be silent, for which I was very well qualified.

Monday Morning.

Sir Joshua told me the other night at tea, that he had that morning finished a work he had been much engaged in, which is writing notes to a translation which Mr. Mason is making,

of Fresnoy's Latin Poem on Painting. He has been many years about it. I dare say it will be a valuable work, for Mason is a good poet, and Sir Joshua an excellent critic, not merely in his own art, but in all elegant literature. But Mason is a little alarmed at the comparison which he fears will be made between his work and Pope's Epistle to Jarvis. The newest blue-stocking I know, and whom I meet everywhere, is a Mr. Locke, a man of fashion, of elegant manners, and so deep in virtú that every artist of every sort allows Mr. Locke to beat him even in the secrets of his own art.

London, 1782.

Poor Johnson is in a bad state of health; I fear his constitution is broken up: I am quite grieved at it; he will not leave an abler defender of religion and virtue behind him, and the following little touch of tenderness which I heard of him last night from one of the Turk's Head Club, endears him to me exceedingly. There are always a great many candidates ready, when any vacancy happens in that club, and it requires no small interest and reputation to get elected; but upon Garrick's death, when numberless applications were made to succeed him, Johnson was deaf to them all; he said, No, there never could be found any successor worthy of such a man; and he insisted upon it there should be a year's widowhood in the club before they thought of a new election. In Dr. Johnson some contrarieties very harmoniously meet; if he has too little charity for the opinions of others, and too little patience with their faults, he has the greatest tenderness for their persons. He told me the other day he hated to hear people whine about metaphysical distresses, when there was so much want and hunger in the world. I told him I supposed then he never wept at any tragedy but Jane Shore, who had died for want of a loaf. He called me a saucy girl, but did not deny the inference.

I spent a delightful day with Mrs. Delany. She is eighty-two years old, and blind, yet she is the object of my veneration, and, I had almost said, envy. Such an excellent mind, so cultivated, such a tranquil, grateful spirit, such a composed piety! She retains all that tenderness of heart which people are supposed to lose, and generally *do* lose, in a very advanced age. She told me with some tears, that she had no dread of death (besides her extreme unworthiness) but what arose from the thought how terribly her loss would be felt by one or two dear friends. Her courage entirely sunk under that idea.

London, 1782.

Thursday I spent the evening at the Bishop of Llandaff's. Mrs. Barrington is so perfectly well-bred, and the

bishop* so delightful, that it is impossible not to be happy in their company. Mitred Chester, and all the favourites, were there. Good Friday I went to hear the Bishop of Llandaff preach; he is extremely sensible, and deeply serious. Mrs. Carter and I met at a little breakfast-party with a French lady who writes metaphysical books. We got into great disgrace, for saying that a little common sense and a little Scripture would lead one much farther and safer than volumes of metaphysics. She forgave us, however, on condition we would promise to read two huge quartoes which she has just translated. What Mrs. Carter will do, I know not, but I shall certainly never fulfil my part of the compact. It is a terrible fetter upon the liberty of free-born English conversation, to have so many foreigners as this town now abounds with, imposing their language upon us.

It has affected me very much to hear of our king's being constrained to part with all his confidential friends, and his own personal servants, in the late general sweep. Out of a hundred stories, I will only tell you one, which concerns your old acquaintance Lord Bateman: he went to the king, as usual, over-night, to ask if his majesty would please to hunt the next day: "Yes, my lord," replied the king, "but I find with great grief that I am not to have the satisfaction of your company." This was the first intimation he had had of the loss of his place; and I really think the contest with France and America might have been settled, though the buck-hounds had retained their old master.

I dined very pleasantly one day last week at the Bishop of Chester's. Johnson was there, and the bishop was very desirous to draw him out, as he wished to show him off to some of the company who had never seen him. He begged me to sit next him at dinner, and to devote myself to making him talk. To this end, I consented to talk more than became me, and our stratagem succeeded. You would have enjoyed seeing him take me by the hand in the middle of dinner, and repeat, with no small enthusiasm, many passages from the "Fair Penitent," &c. I urged him to take a *little* wine; he replied, "I can't drink a *little*, child, therefore I never touch it. Abstinence is as easy to me as *temperance* would be difficult." He was very good-humoured and gay. One of the company happened to say a word about poetry, "Hush, hush," said he, "it is dangerous to say a word of poetry before her; it is talking of the art of war before Hannibal." He continued his jokes, and lamented that I had not married Chatterton, that posterity might have seen a propagation of poets.

The metaphysical and philological Lord Monboddo breakfasted with us yesterday; he is such an extravagant adorer of the ancients, that he scarcely allows the English language to

* Dr. Barrington, afterward Bishop of Durham.

be capable of any excellence, still less the French. He has a hearty contempt for that people and their language; he said we moderns are entirely degenerated. I asked in what? "In every thing," was his answer. Men are not so tall as they were, women are not so handsome as they were, nobody can now write a long period, every thing dwindles. I ventured to say that though long periods were fine in oratory and declamation, yet that such was not the language of passion. He insisted that it was. I defended my opinion by many passages from Shakspeare, among others, those broken bursts of passion in Constance, "Gone to be married!"—"Gone to swear a truce!"—"False blood with false blood joined!" Again, "My name is Constance. I am Geoffrey's wife—Young Arthur is my son, and he is slain." We then resumed our old quarrel about the slave-trade: he loves slavery upon principle. I asked him how he could vindicate such an enormity. He owned it was because Plutarch justified it. Among much just thinking and some taste, especially in his valuable third volume on the "Origin and Progress of Language," he entertained some opinions so absurd, that they would be hardly credible if he did not deliver them himself, both in writing and conversation, with a gravity which shows that he is in earnest, but which makes the hearer feel that to be grave exceeds all power of face. He is so wedded to system, that as Lord Barrington said to me the other day, rather than sacrifice his favourite opinion, that men were born with tails, he would be contented to wear one himself.

Hampton, 1782.

The other morning the captain of one of Commodore Johnson's Dutch prizes breakfasted at Sir Charles Middleton's, and related the following little anecdote:—One day he went out of his own ship to dine on board another; while he was there a storm arose, which in a short time made an entire wreck of his own ship, to which it was impossible for him to return. He had left on board two little boys, one four, the other five years old, under the care of a poor black servant; the people struggled to get out of the sinking ship into a large boat, and the poor black took his two little children, tied them into a bag, and put in a little pot of sweetmeats for them, slung them across his shoulder, and put them into the boat; the boat b this time was quite full; the black was stepping into it himself, but was told by the master there was no room for him, that either he or the children must perish, for the weight of both would sink the boat. The exalted heroic negro did not hesitate a moment; "Very well," said he, "give my duty to my master, and tell him I beg pardon for all my faults." And then, —guess the rest—plunged to the bottom never to rise again, till the sea shall give up her dead. I told it the other day to Lord Monboddo, who fairly burst into tears. The greatest lady

in this land wants me to make an elegy of it, but it is above poetry. Did I tell you I breakfasted at Lord Barrington's? I am now in love with all the four brothers of that noble family. I think the peer as agreeable as any of them, always excepting the bishop, however, whose conversation that morning was, as it always is, instructive and delightful. In the evening I went to a small party; Lord Stormont made the chief figure among the male talkers. Mrs. Crewe looked beautifully, and Lady Susan talked *wittily*. That I talked prudently you will allow, when I tell you that I caught myself in an invective against the new ministry, which I wisely thought proper to address to Lady Charlotte Wentworth, forgetting at the moment that she was Lord Rockingham's sister.

Lord Pembroke came in laughing; I asked what diverted him, he told me he had met George Selwyn, who found himself very much annoyed in the streets with chimney-sweeping boys; they were very clamorous; surrounded, daubed, and persecuted him; in short, would not let him go till they had forced money from him; at length he made them a low bow, and cried, "Gentlemen, I have often heard of the *majesty* of the people, I presume your highnesses are in court-mourning."

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

1782.

DEAR MADAM,

As you are the best of secretaries, you are also, I dare say, the best of interpreters; and I beg you to translate the sentiments of the Smelts and Montagues into the most forcible language, and assure Mrs. Garrick that it is with great regret we are, by *our* engagements and *hers*, obliged to defer the honour and pleasure of dining with her till Wednesday se'nnight. The delays of what one likes might suit well with the antediluvian lease of life; and Hilpah might wait for Zilpah on the mountains with tolerable patience, from Monday to Wednesday se'nnight; but for such a poor kind of day-fly as your humble servant to defer so great a pleasure is grievous. My best and most affectionate compliments attend Mrs. Garrick.

I am, dear madam,
Ever yours,
E. MONTAGU.

Monday.

MESDAMES GARRICK AND MORE,

Most engaged and engaging ladies, will you drink tea with me on Thursday, with a very small party? I think it an age, not a golden age, since I saw you.

Ever most affectionately yours,
E. MONTAGU.

From Mr. John Henderson to Miss More.

1783.

How can I begin a letter to so good a friend with an upbraiding? Yet have you not deserved it? and so deserved it that I cannot withhold it?

You have been my friend. I was happy in the imagination,—happier that you were never unlike that delightful image: and might I not have expected from you a freedom which would have blessed me with a communication of your sentiments? Would my friend have disliked my buckles, hair, &c., and not have told me? Would she not have attempted to mould me to her mind?—*whose mind* to have pleased, what a pleasure would it have been! But saying nothing yourself, you have committed the reformation of me to another. Your friend Miss Adams pleads your authority for new-modelling me, that I may be made like a gentleman: still I stand out. Pardon me that I am loth to submit, at once, even to your authority. Know then that she is so absolute as to allow of none of my reasons, and we have compromised to appeal to you—Whether I should be a man of the world in *dress* and *address?* I am here to plead for myself. Oh! vouchsafe me a favourable answer—I mean favourable to my negative side!

And what arguments shall I use? Not now of divinity, they are controverted by every doctor. Not of ethics, the casuists will never agree. I will not reason logically; the sophists will deny for disputation sake. I write to you *now* as my friend. Receive, then, an argument which a friend surely cannot resist: Would any friend make another uneasy? No. Not even for the exquisite enjoyment of fellow-sufferings would you pain me? Are you not my friend? then do not command me to be genteel—it would trouble me—it would be easy to bring many other reasons—*but between us this must be most reasonable*—allow it, then, I beseech you. But why would it make you uneasy? Because it no way suits me. My personage, qualifications, manners, are of a clean contrary cast; therefore it would make me most foolishly various and inconsistent.

Conceive my person well-dressed, my mien well-gestured, my qualifications shown to the fashionable world, my manners exercised in polite company, and you conceive contrasts far odder than ought now to belong to me; and something too ridiculous to be owned *by you*. But farther, my turn of thinking is widely different from *that* essentially necessary to *support* such a character with propriety and spirit; what is worse, my taste is offended by most things in the fashions; nor can it ever come to. If, through the changes of the fashions, it may perhaps some time happen, that something may become fashionable which I can like, it will soon be un-

fashionable again. Above all, my feelings are inconsistent with such a life. I relish worldly company too little—and worldly things. My heart-strings have heretofore twined on earthly things—they have been torn away. Now the strings can hold no more,—as the vine whose tendrils were broken by the storm that beat it down from its support, they stretch not for another—*only friendship* remains in my fond clasp; *that too* has been too often separated from me, yet I fondly clasp it still. But what has friendship to do with this affair? Only that your friendship may release me from this cruel bondage.

N.B.—I do nothing for singularity. I always avoid it so far as I can without hurting my peace. You see then my reason—it is a most serious one. It is with me insuperable.

We expect your answer. Do favour me. Decide soon, and kindly. Can you wish to make my life painful? Whether you can or not, I most heartily pray that you may ever enjoy uninterrupted ease of body, and in your excellent mind (which is above the world) a peace which the world cannot give or take away.

JOHN HENDERSON.

Be pleased to present my very friendly respects to each of your sisters.

I earnestly entreat Patty to take my part strenuously, if your heart can want an advocate for persuading it to give me lasting ease.

I know she is on my side, and are not you too? I hope so. I most wishfully hope it!—Fare always well.

From Mrs. Kennicott to Miss H. More.

1782.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Just as I received your letter, we were setting out for Dr. Kennicott's living in Cornwall, and while we were there, we pleased ourselves with the hopes of seeing you as we came back; but the parliament was dissolved, and our schemes were dissolved with it.

A thousand thanks to you for the heartiness with which you rejoice in our joy. Dr. Kennicott finished his Bible the end of July. I wish you had been at the jubilee we held at the conclusion of it, for Miss Adams and I displayed so much genius upon the occasion, that I verily believe you could not have helped celebrating it. Our Pembroke friends are just returned, and if they knew I was writing, would send some civil things.

I would not have you for the future make yourself so sure of my not exposing such of your opinions as you are pleased to say many of your correspondents would style *methodistical*; —a bugbear word, very ingeniously introduced, to frighten

people from expressing those sentiments which they ought both to cherish and avow. You will, I hope, always find yourself greatly superior to such fears; for I consider those persons as having the happy power of doing the most essential service to the cause of religion who, with taste to enjoy all the pleasures of this world, ever appear to hold it in due subordination to the next; and who, with talent to admire the wit of profane learning, manifest upon all proper occasions that sacred studies form their chief delight.

I long to see all the fine things you have made. How unequally are talents distributed in this world! That you should be able to write such verses, knit such stockings, and make such aprons! I envy you only for the two last, which would be much more useful accomplishments to me than to you.

Our good dean* is as difficult of access as the Grand Seignior, unless his friends are sick, or in distress, or the young men want his advice, and then his time seems to be at the service of every one who can be benefited by it. Give my best love to Mrs. Garrick.

Yours in all gratitude and affection,

A. KENNICOTT.

CHAPTER III.

MISS HANNAH MORE quitted Mrs. Garrick's in the June of this year, 1782, and paid a visit to Dr. and Mrs. Kennicott at Oxford in her way to Bristol. We will extract two or three paragraphs of the letter she wrote from thence.

Oxford, June 13, 1782.

Who do you think is my principal cicerone at Oxford? Only Dr. Johnson! and we do so gallant it about! You cannot imagine with what delight he showed me every part of his own college (Pembroke), nor how rejoiced Henderson looked to make one in the party. Dr. Adams, the master of Pembroke, had contrived a very pretty piece of gallantry. We spent the day and evening at his house. After dinner Johnson begged to conduct me to see the college, he would let no one show it me but himself,—"This was my room; this Shenstone's." Then, after pointing out all the rooms of the poets who had been of his college, "In short," said he, "we were a nest of singing-birds"—"Here we walked, there we played at cricket." He ran over with pleasure the history of the juvenile days he passed there. When we came into the common room, we

* Dr. Jackson, Dean of Christ Church.

spied a fine large print of Johnson, framed and hung up that very morning, with this motto: "*And is not Johnson ours, himself a host?*" Under which stared you in the face, "From *Miss More's Sensibility.*" This little incident amused us;—but alas! Johnson looks very ill indeed—spiritless and wan. However, he made an effort to be cheerful, and I exerted myself much to make him so.

Oxford, 1782.

We are just setting off to spend a day or two at the Bishop of Llandaff's* near Wallingford. But first I must tell you I am engaged to dine on my return with the learned Dr. Edwards of Jesus College, to meet Dr. Johnson, Thomas Warton, and whatever else is most learned and famous in this University.

Oxford, Friday.

We had a delectable visit at the bishop's. It is a paradise, and they are meet inhabitants for it. I have hardly time to say a word, we have such an inundation of company. There are in the next room three canons, three *heads*, three ladies, one dean, one student, and *one* professor. I got your letter with those of the French academicians† enclosed. So I am to send them the history of my life! *I think I had better cut it out of the European Magazine*, or get Mrs. —— to write it; in their hands all my sins will make a flaming figure.

It was on her return from this visit at Dr. Kennicotts, that she wrote the humorous epistle to her late hostess, which I have ventured to introduce, as a satire on a practice which at that time had begun to prevail, having been in a great measure introduced by the black letter, or Chattertonian controversy, of writing books, the bulk of which consisted of notes, with only a line or two of text at the top of each page. The appellations on which this mock etymological investigation was founded allude to a little playful whim which chanced to occur in their hours of complete relaxation at Dr. Kennicott's. What gave rise to the joke it is as impossible as it is immaterial to explain; but the party, it seems, had each adopted the name of some animal: Dr. K. was the elephant; Mrs. K., dromedary; Miss Adams, antelope; and H. More, rhinoceros. We are not concerned to establish the wisdom of this proceeding, but let those only charge her with folly who, having purchased an equal right to trifle, have less abused the privilege.

* Dr. Barrington.

† That the reader may understand the allusion in the above letter, it is necessary to inform him that a few months before, the Academy of Arts, Sciences, and Belles Lettres at Rouen, had done our authoress the honour of electing her one of their members. She kept up an occasional correspondence with this academy till near the time of the French Revolution.

Hampton, Dec. 24, 1782.

DEAR DROMY, (*a*)

Pray send word if *Ante* (*b*) is come, and also how *Ele* (*c*) does, to your very affectionate

RHYNEY. (*d*)

Notes on the above epistle, by a commentator of the latter end of the nineteenth century.

This epistle is all that is come down to us of this voluminous author, and is probably the only thing she ever wrote that was worth preserving, or which might reasonably expect to reach posterity. Her name is only presented to us in some beautiful hendecasyllables written by the best Latin poet of his time—(*Bishop Lowth*).

Note (*a*).

Dromy.—From the termination of this address, it seems to have been written to a woman, though there is no internal evidence to support this hypothesis. The best critics are much puzzled about the orthography of this abbreviation. Wartonius, and other skilful etymologists, contend that it ought to be spelled *drummy*, being addressed to a lady who was probably fond of warlike instruments, and who had a singular predilection for a *canon*.* Drummy, say they, was a tender diminutive of drum, as the best authors in their more familiar writings now begin to use *gunny* for *gun*. But *Hurdius*, a contemporary critic, contends with more probability that it ought to be written *Drome*, from Hippodrome; a learned leech† and elegant bard of Bath, having left it upon record that this lady spent much of her time at the riding-school, being a very exquisite judge of horsemanship. *Colmanus* and *Horatius Strawberryensis* insist that it ought to be written *Dromo*, in reference to the Dromo Lorarius of the Latin dramatist.

Note (*b*).

Ante.—Scaliger 3d says, this name simply signifies the appellation of uncle's wife, and ought to be written *Aunty*. But here again are various readings. Philologists of yet greater name affirm that it was meant to designate *pre-eminence*, and therefore ought to be written *ante*, before, from the Latin; a language now pretty well forgotten, though the authors who wrote in it are still preserved in French translations. The younger Madame Dacier insists that this lady was against all men, and that it ought to be spelled *anti*; but this Kennicotus, a

* Dr. Kennicott, Canon of Christ Church.
† Dr. Harrington.

rabbi of the most recondite learning, with much critical wrath, vehemently contradicts; affirming it to have been impossible she could have been against mankind, whom all mankind admired. He adds that *ante* is for *antelope*, and is emblematically used to express an elegant and slender animal; or that it is an elongation of *ant*, the emblem of virtuous citizenship.

Note (*c*).

Ele.—Here criticism is confounded, and etymology is swallowed up in the boundless ocean of conjecture. Some have pretended that it should be written E. L. A., which are the initials of *elegant* and *learned antiquary*. The following flight of a hardy imagination is proposed. The profound mythologist* (of whom a great female critic has said, "That he was born in all ages and lived in all countries,") has proved that the poems of Rowley were really *ancient;* the slashing *Tyrwhittius* has proved with equal certainty that they are *modern:* while a *righi lernede clerke*† has no less demonstrably proved that they were not *written at all*. These opposite opinions seem all as clear as any proposition in Euclid; yet as the principal of these poems is called the tragedy of *Ella*, may not the *Ele* mentioned in this epistle be, by a small corruption, the famous *Ella*, Governor of Bristol Castle? and so here comes in a fourth hypothesis, that he himself was indubitably the author of these controverted poems.

Note (*d*).

Rhymy—Or, as some read it, Rhyny. This is doubtless the name of the author of this admired and valuable epistle, which has afforded such rich materials to modern criticism: yet there are not wanting those who controvert this plain fact. Some refer this name to the geographical relation between the author and the place of her birth, and conclude that she was born on the banks of the Rhine, a bold and happy metonymy, as we say Ithacus and the Pylian, for Ulysses and Nestor. Her having been in the house of a very amiable German, at the time of her writing this famous epistle, confirms this opinion. Others, who assert that in her youth she had been addicted to poetry, think with more reason that *Rhymy* may be derived from *Rhyno*, an old provincial term for money, there having been in all ages a beautiful antithesis between *poetry* and *pence*.

She went to Bristol as usual, and returned in the latter end of the year to Mrs. Garrick and Hampton.

* Mr. Bryant. † Dr. Heberden.

Hampton, Dec. 31, 1782.

Never was such delicious weather! I passed two hours in the garden the other day as if it had been April, with my friend Mr. Brown.* I took a very agreeable lecture from him in his art, and he promised to give me taste by inoculation. I am sure he has a charming one, and he illustrates every thing he says about gardening with some literary or grammatical allusion. He told me he compared his art to literary composition. Now *there*, said he, pointing his finger, I make a comma, and there, pointing to another spot where a more decided turn is proper, I make a colon; at another part (where an interruption is desirable to break the view) a parenthesis—now a full stop, and then I begin another subject.

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

DEAR MADAM, *Bath*, 1782.

The only water-drinkers of any use, importance, or merit in human life are your drinkers of Helicon. We who take our morning's draught at the Bath Pump, Tunbridge Wells, &c. &c. are condemned to idle sauntering. What may be *necessary* for an invalid becomes a general mode; and rosy health, and youth, and strength adopt our regimen, so that Bath is as much dedicated to the syren idleness as ever Paphos was to the Cyprian goddess. Sauntering Jack and idle Joan are the Bath characters; and the few moments an invalid might read or write are continually interrupted by visitants. Thus, my dear madam, have I been prevented from making my acknowledgments for some most valuable presents I received from Dr. Stonehouse. I am afraid we are generally more intent on enjoying a benefit than in showing our gratitude for it; this is usually a crime, but in the present case it was a virtue, so far as I dedicated the first hours I could command to reading the excellent pieces he sent me. I must entreat you to send me the doctor's direction. I cannot express to you the delight I enjoyed the day I spent with you all at Bristol; I have talked of nothing else; and I had this morning a letter from Mrs. Carter from Deal, congratulating me upon it, for I wrote her an account of it. If it were possible to feel any addition to my mortification at not having your company here, it would be not enjoying that of the friend,† of great extent of genius, and small dimensions of person, whom you so happily describe. I am of your opinion, that idleness is criminal in men of parts; but there are certain desultory geniuses which, like the bird of paradise, are destined to flutter in every region, and abide in none. They are pretty birds, to be sure, but not so useful as the barn-door fowl, who get their food in the farm-yard, and leave an egg every day in return; the others only drop now

* Capability Brown. † John Henderson.

and then a fine feather from their glittering wing and plumy crest, which perhaps are picked up by the sedulous collector, and adorn his fancy-works.

My friend Mrs. Vesey set forward towards Ireland the day before I left town. It is always disagreeable to part with a friend to any distance, but when the roaring ocean, the boisterous main intervenes, the separation is more solemn. She went off in tolerable spirits, but I think her health much impaired of late. I would fain persuade myself that the voyage and change of air may be of service to her constitution. As to Mr. ——, he is so old and so young, so infirm and so strong, I know not what judgment to form of him. One day in a sick-bed, the next at the Opera or Pantheon; one hour in a fit of epilepsy, another in a fit of gallantry! a *cheerful* old age is a fine thing, a *gay* old age a very absurd one. However, it is the ton of the times to confound all distinction of age, sex, and rank; no one ever thinks of sustaining a certain character, unless it is one they have assumed at a masquerade.

I am charmed, and I hope improved, by Dr. Stonehouse's Works: I shall send to London for some of them, in order to diffuse the benefit. I know your goodness to me will make you glad to hear I have been perfectly well ever since I passed the happy day at Bristol. I am ever, my dear madam,

Your most grateful and affectionate
humble servant,
E. MONTAGU.

From H. More to her sister Martha.

Hampton, Jan. 9, 1783.

It was so unusual for me to receive a letter two days following, that when Sally's came on Wednesday, I had so strong a presentiment of its contents that I did not open it for a long time; but laid it down very deliberately, and went and did several things which I thought too well I should not be able to do after I had read it. Yet, notwithstanding all this preparation, I was just as much shocked at reading it as if I had expected nothing like it.* I could not get quite through it for many hours after, and yet there is no cause for grief, but much for joy, much cause to be thankful. And I am *very* thankful that he was spared to us so long—that he was removed when life began to grow a burthen to himself—that he did not survive his faculties—that he was not confined to the miseries of a sick-bed—but above all, that his life was so exemplary, and his death so easy. I wished I had seen him. Yet that is a vain regret. I hope he did not inquire after me, or miss me. Mrs. Garrick was very much affected, as my father was a very great favourite of hers.

* The death of her father.

Hampton Jan. 28, 1783.

Since my dear father's death, I have never yet had resolution to go out of doors, so much as to walk round the garden, in almost three weeks; but as the day is fine, I intend to get out when I have finished this scrawl.

Miss More appears to have remained in her usual deep retirement at Hampton till March, when she removed with Mrs. Garrick, for the spring, to the Adelphi.

London, March.

Another application for an epitaph. I had rather write a hundred lines on any other subject, than to ascribe virtues to people I did not know, or who are undeserving. I cannot do it. Pray give my compliments to all my friends, and tell them I hope none of them will die soon; but in case they should, I wish they would be so good, instead of leaving me any thing, to insert a passage in their wills, that I am not to be asked to write their epitaphs. My monumental wit is all disposed of, and I am sure I can never cobble up enough for another inscription. I mentioned yesterday to Lady Spencer the idea of a print of the Maid of the Haystack. She says, by all means; it may be of great service, at least by keeping up the attention of people. I thought the Peace was to put an end to all divisions and disturbances, but I think I never knew this town in such a state of anarchy and distraction. The disputes are not about peace or war, but who shall have power and place, both of which are lost as soon as obtained. Before you can pay your congratulations to your friends on their promotion, presto! pass! they are out again. Lord Falmouth told me he sat down with a most eager appetite to his soup and roast at eight in the morning, and several of the lords had company to dinner at that hour, after the House broke up. Miss Anna Maria Shipley formally presented to me the other day her future husband, Sir William Jones, and we had a great deal of conversation. He is a very amiable as well as learned man, and possesses more languages, perhaps, than any man in Europe. I send you a few stanzas which I wrote on the death of Lieutenant John Gwatkin, not in the spirit of an epitaph writer, but with honest tears.

I.

Though Peace at length her grateful ensign rears,
The Muse *will* stain the olive with her tears;
For you the mournful maid sad vigils keeps,
Wives! Sisters! Mothers! 'tis for you she weeps.

II.

For you in vain shall Peace her reign restore,
She comes, but brings your buried joys no more:
Sons! Husbands! Mothers! lo, at one sad stroke,
Poor bleeding nature's softest bands are broke.

III.

Glory and conquest! names of mighty sound!
Where are your lenient balms in sorrow found?
Your beams, when fortune smiles, some joy impart,
But shed weak balsam on a broken heart.

IV.

Shall public honours dignify the brave,
Nor private sorrows fall on Virtue's grave?
Oh, gallant youth! at thy loved memory fired,
The Muse laments that valour she admired.

V.

Though Glory bade thy bright Ambition rise,
Fond Nature held thee in her tend'rest ties,
Each mild affection of the soul to prove,
Of filial feeling, and fraternal Love.

VI.

While patriot zeal thy ardent bosom warmed,
The gentler arts of peace thy breast informed;
Tho' dauntless courage fix'd thy youthful mind,
Yet lettered elegance thy soul refined.

VII.

Tho' short thy period, glorious was thy race!
How fair a promise crowned that narrow space!
Oh! much lamented youth, be this thy praise,
Who lives to virtue lives a length of days.

VIII.

Still let domestic anguish bear in mind,
Who dies to honour fills the task assigned:
Where short the span, designs for deeds shall tell,
And duties unperformed the account shall swell!

London, March 7, 1783.

I was yesterday at Mrs. Ord's, to start upon my career of friendship with Mr. Smelt. I enclose part of his letter to her, in which you will see that I have the honour to be in favour with this very exalted character. You know he was preceptor to the Prince of Wales, under the direction of the Earl of Holderness, and as he would receive no settled appointment, he is distinguished by the high appellation of the king's friend. We had a pleasant interesting evening. I have known him for some years; he is an old acquaintance, but a new friend. Her party was small, as it was made on purpose to bring us together. I had Sir Joshua, Cambridge, and Mr. Smelt all to myself; not badly off, you will say. On Friday evening I was at a very fine party at Lady Rothes, where I found a vast many of my friends, —Mrs. Montagu, Boscawen, Carter, Thrale, Burney, and Lady Dartrey; in short, it was remarked that there was not a woman in London who has been distinguished for taste and lite-

rature that was absent. The men were modest, and said they were abashed, the other sex made so strong a party.

I refused to go to-night with Lady Middleton and Mrs. Porteus to hear Tessier read; for even if I had the least appetite for any thing of that sort, I should certainly prefer being drawn into the stream, and going to see Mrs. Siddons, which I have also refused to do, though Lady Spencer took the pains to come yesterday to ask me to go with her. You know I have long withdrawn myself from the theatre. Lady Bathurst came by appointment, and made a very long and kind visit; she was quite happy, in hourly expectation of Lord Apsley, after a two years' absence in Germany and France. We dined the other day at Mrs. Montagu's. Out of sixteen persons, there were not three English men or women. De Luc, the Swiss metaphysician and geologist, a man of great merit, and Madame la Fite, were all the foreigners I knew; but my good stars placed Mr. Locke on one side of me; which was some consolation for having a prate-apace jackanapes of a Frenchman (a *bel esprit* though) on the other. Mr. Locke never speaks but to instruct, in matters of taste, especially in the fine arts. In the evening we had a very strong reinforcement of blues. Mrs. Montagu inquires after you all.

London, 1783.

Did you hear of a woman of quality, an earl's daughter, perishing for want the other day near Cavendish-square? The sad story is, that she had married an attorney, a bad man, and had several children; they all frequently experienced the want of a morsel of bread. Lady Jane grew extremely ill, and faint with hunger. An old nurse, who had never forsaken her mistress in her misfortunes, procured by some means a sixpence; Lady Jane sent her out to buy a cow-heel; the nurse brought it in, and carried a piece of it to her mistress; "No," said she, "I feel myself dying—all relief is too late; and it would be cruel in me to rob the children of a morsel, by wasting it on one who must die,"—so saying, she expired. I leave you to make your own comments on this domestic tragedy, in a metropolis drowned in luxury. What will Sally say to side dishes and third courses now?

Yesterday we dined at the Bishop of Salisbury's.* Dr. Heberden, Dr. and Mrs. Kennicott, Mythology Bryant, and Mrs. Carter. With Mr. Bryant I always have some delightful conversation; he is not only a very able, but a pious man, and has devoted his pagan learning to truly Christian purposes. I spent the afternoon on Tuesday with Mrs. Delany and the Duchess of Portland. I think that charming duchess very much broken in her looks; and she is not likely to be cured by her son's being appointed premier to this distracted country.

* Dr. Barrington.

His ministry, I suppose, will be still shorter than his viceroyalty was. These labours and vicissitudes are the blessings of greatness. Even riches do not make rich. I should be glad to know what our friend Dr. Stonehouse would say to such new-fashioned doctrines as I have lately heard in a charity-sermon on a Sunday by a dignified ecclesiastic, and a popular one too, but I will not tell his name: he told the rich and great that they ought to be extremely liberal in their charities, because they were happily *exempted* from the *severer virtues*. How do you like such a sentiment from a Christian teacher? What do you think Polycarp or Ignatius would say to it?

London, March 29, 1783.

I spent an evening lately with Lady Charlotte Wentworth. She had a very select little party, and they made me read to them;—poetry too! I defended myself as well as I could, but, to my great regret, was forced to comply. Lady Charlotte has a great deal of general literature, and, what is far better, she is really a pious and well-informed Christian. Sunday I breakfasted at Sir Charles Middleton's, and we went with the Bishop of Chester afterward, and heard him preach a solemn Resurrection sermon. They set me down, as usual, after church.

I thought Mrs. Garrick would drop with laughing, when I read in Sally's letters that you spent all your leisure in teaching the *governesses* to read and spell. It struck her fancy mightily. I am glad to hear such good tidings of Henderson. I hope he will begin to put his great parts to good use, and avoid the condemnation as well of the *buried* as of the abused talent. I passed the whole evening at the Bishop of St. Asaph's in a very pleasant wrangle with Mr. Walpole about poets: he abusing all my favourites, and I all his; he reprobating Akenside, Thomson, and all my bards of the *blank song;* and I all his odes and lyrics. I told him (rather lightly, I fear) that David had expressed my notion of the obscurity of lyric poetry, when he said, "I will utter my dark speech upon the harp." Sir William Jones (for the new judge is also knighted previous to his Indian voyage) is gone down to prepare all things for his and his lady's accommodation. She is a little low at the thoughts that she is leaving all, perhaps for ever; but she goes with what she best loves, an advantage with which few women set out to India. They are to be married in a few days. We are to have one more evening together.

Hoole has just sent me his preface to his translation of Ariosto, which is coming out: an expensive present, since I can now do no less than subscribe for the whole work, and a guinea and a half for a translation of a book from the original is dearish. Saturday I went to Mrs. Reynolds's to meet Sir Joshua and Dr. Johnson; the latter is vastly recovered. Our conversation ran very much upon religious opinions, chiefly

those of the Roman Catholics. He took the part of the Jesuits, and I declared myself a Jansenist. He was very angry because I quoted Boileau's bon-mot upon the Jesuits, that they had lengthened the creed and shortened the decalogue; but I continued sturdily to vindicate my old friends of the Port Royal. On Tuesday I was at Mrs. Vesey's assembly, which was too full to be very pleasant. She dearly loves company; and as she is connected with almost every thing that is great in the good sense of the word, she is always sure to have too much. I inquired after the Shipleys, who had promised to meet us there, and was told they had just sent an excuse; for that Anna Maria and Sir William were at that moment in the act of marrying. They will be now completely banished; but, as they will be banished together, they do not think it a hardship. May God bless them, and may his stupendous learning be sanctified! I went and sat the other morning with Dr. Johnson, who is still far from well. Our conversation was very interesting, but so many people came in that I began to feel foolish, and soon sneaked off. He has written some very pretty verses on his friend Levett, which he gave me, and which I will send you when I can. He was all kindness to me.

London, April 5, 1783.

On Saturday I dined at Apsley House, where there was a good deal of company. Lord Apsley has brought with him all the benefit to be derived from travelling, and has more vivacity and spirit than falls to the share of our modern young men of quality in general. Lord Bathurst entertained me a good deal, apart, after dinner, with anecdotes of his godfather, Lord Bolingbroke, of Pope, his own father, and others, which, as they fell under his own eye, perhaps I could have learned from no other man living. He entirely exculpates Pope from any evil intention in printing the Patriot King, which excited Bolingbroke's hatred so much after Pope's death: though I do still think it was a very unaccountable step.

I received your letter on Wednesday. I stole that day out of the fire, as I may say, and staid at home maugre several invitations. I had really dined out such a vast number of days that I was quite weary, and was inflexible to all entreaty; indeed, so much visiting does now begin to be very irksome, for I go to many places when I should rejoice to stay at home; but I consider that this round of visiting will not last long, for I begin to calculate that there is little more than a clear month between this and June.

London, May 5, 1783.

I went yesterday to hear the Bishop of Chester: that good man is under great affliction for the death of Dr. Stinton, his dearest friend through life. In the sermon there happened to

be a passage which, among other losses, mentioned the death of a beloved companion; he was so much affected that his voice faltered, and he could not go on without the greatest difficulty. As most of the audience knew the circumstance, they were much touched at it. Poor Ryland! from the time he absconded till he was apprehended, he continually sat with a razor in a prayer-book. Think what a state of mind, to have just convictions and faith enough to pray, and yet to be so desperately wretched, as to live with the instrument of self-murder continually in his hand. His bane and antidote were not so comfortable to him as Cato's were, for he had the misfortune to know better and to believe more.

Is it not very melancholy when you go to see our solitary mother? I endeavour to think of it as little as I can, but in spite of my endeavours, it mixes with all my thoughts. Saturday we had a dinner at home; Mrs. Carter, Miss Hamilton, the Kennicotts, and Dr. Johnson. Poor Johnson exerted himself exceedingly; but he was very ill, and looked so dreadfully that it quite grieved me. He is more mild and complacent than he used to be. His sickness seems to have softened his mind, without having at all weakened it. I was struck with the mild radiance of this setting sun. We had but a small party of such of his friends as we knew would be most agreeable to him; and as we were all very attentive, and paid him the homage he both expects and deserves, he was very communicative, and of course instructive and delightful in the highest degree.

London, May, 1783.

I dined one day last week in Audley-street,* to celebrate the viscount's† birthday, who completed his twenty-fifth year; his mother told him she wanted to have him married, and advised him to fall in love; he said he should if he were with any young ladies in the country, but that he never could in London, for the women did not stand still long enough for a man to fall in love with them. The other day I divided between Lady Bathurst and Lady Charlotte Wentworth. The latter gave me a little packet she had just received from Madame le Cat, directed for me; it contained a pretty French snuff-box, on which is the tomb of Rousseau, in the Isle of Poplars. I was invited last week to six or eight dinners and assemblies, but did not go to any of them. I intended to have sent this away last night, but Mr. Cambridge came in at tea, and sat gossiping and being agreeable till twelve; and I was so full of dactyls and spondees, that I quite forgot my letter. I was asked to meet the chymical and polemical Bishop Watson to-day at Mr. Cole's, but was engaged elsewhere.

The king and queen have suffered infinitely from the loss of

* Mrs. Boscawen's. † Viscount Falmouth.

the sweet little prince, who was the darling of their hearts. I was charmed with an expression of the king's. "Many people," said he, "would regret they ever *had* so *sweet* a child, since they were forced to part with him: that is not my case; I am thankful to God for having graciously allowed me to enjoy such a creature for four years." Yet his sorrow was excessive.

London, May 22, 1783.

I have finished my campaign in town; we do not now appear to anybody unless we meet them strolling in the streets. We dined one day last week at Mrs. Bannister's, to meet the Bishop of Winchester and Mrs. North; there was a great deal of other company, among whom was Mr. Swinburne, the author of "Travels to Spain, Sicily," &c.: one is always surprised to find the author of two or three great big burly quartoes a *little* genteel young man. He is modest and agreeable, not wise and heavy, like his books. The next morning I breakfasted with the Bishop of Chester and Mrs. Porteus, and we visited the tombs and dwelt among the dust in Westminster Abbey. On Saturday I wound up my town adventures by dining and passing the evening with Mrs. Boscawen and a little snug party, consisting of the above-said bishop, the Coles, and the Duchess of Beaufort. Since that time I have been inexorable to all invitations, though two rival parties were strongly pressed upon me last night; one at Mr. Soame Jenyns's, and the other to meet the Barringtons at Bishop Porteus's: there was no way of getting off either but by refusing both.

A visiter is just gone, quite chagrined that I am such a rigid Methodist that I cannot come to her assembly on Sunday, though she protests, with great piety, that she *never has cards*, and that it is quite savage in me to think there can be any harm in a little agreeable music.

From Bishop Porteus to Miss H. More.

London, May 23, 1783.

DEAR MADAM,

It sounds, I confess, very wicked and ill-natured to say that I am very glad you were so ingenious in tormenting yourself with the idea of a supposed transgression; but the truth is, I really am so. For although there certainly could not be much reason for giving yourself the smallest uneasiness on account of an offence which you never committed, yet to that fortunate uneasiness I am indebted for a most obliging and agreeable note, to which otherwise I could have had no claim.

Be assured that I set the highest value on this and every other mark of your regard, and that it is with the greatest pleasure I obey your commands, in giving you this assurance, under my own hand, which, though it can send you nothing

but a miserable scrawl, written in the midst of hurry and perpetual interruptions, yet has the merit of conveying to you, in these plain homely characters, nothing but plain homely truth. I should, perhaps, have been able to dress what I had to say in a better garb, had I waited, as you allowed me to, till I was in the country, and quiet, and at leisure. But when, alas! will this be? Will it ever happen (says your parenthesis) on this side heaven? Those comforts are, I confess, the wish, the almost only secular and ardent wish of my heart. But it is not always fit that secular wishes should be gratified: it is, perhaps, the will of Heaven that mine should not, and that labour and business should be the destiny of my whole life. If Providence has thus decreed, I submit, as I ought to do, with cheerfulness; and am truly thankful for the many other blessings I already enjoy. Among these, I give the first place to the affection and esteem of many excellent persons whom I have the happiness to call my friends. If in this number I may be allowed to rank Miss Hannah More, it will contribute not a little to lighten my approaching fatigue; and wherever I am, whether on the mountains of Cumberland, on the lakes of Lancashire, whether at Chester, at London, or at Hunton, it will always be matter of triumph and of consolation to me that I am permitted to subscribe myself

Your most faithful and obedient servant,

B. CHESTER.

From Hannah More to her sister.

Hampton, May 29, 1783.

We have been at Hampton near a week. I am here to-night by myself. Mrs. Garrick is gone to town. I begged to stay behind, both because I have a great deal of business to do, and because I hate London when I have nothing to do, and nobody to see there; and having taken my leave once, I do not like to begin again. Before I left London, I spent a whole morning with Mrs. Delany. She gave me a great treat—the reading of all Dean Swift's letters, written to herself. She likewise gave me my choice of one to bring away for your book of autographs. I had the modesty to choose the shortest, and she had the modesty to oppose it, because there was so much to her praise in it; but if that were to be an objection, there would not be one for my purpose.

Did I tell you that the Bishop of Chester's Sermons were out of print in eight days? I hope the age is not so bad as we took it to be; and yet it cannot be very good neither, when the strawberries at Lady Stormont's breakfast last Saturday morning cost one hundred and fifty pounds.

I am tired of writing several letters, and of reading the Lives of the Reformers, and of trimming a fine gauze handkerchief; and now I am going to close the night with a thick quarto of Dr. Beattie's metaphysics."

To her sister.

Hampton, 1783.

As I do not go to Ranelagh, nor the play, nor the opera, nor sup at Charles Fox's, nor play at Brooke's, nor bet at Newmarket, I have not seen that worthy branch of the house of Bourbon, the Duke de Chartres. I never heard of such a low, vulgar, vicious fellow. His character is—

Poltron sur mer,
Escroc sur terre,
Et vaut rien partout.

I have read Colman's "Ars Poetica;" he is much too negligent a versifier, but easy and elegant. I believe I forgot to mention Mrs. Vesey's pleasant Tuesday parties to you. It is a select society, which meets at her house every other Tuesday, and of which I am invited to be an unworthy member. It assembles on the day on which the Turk's Head Club dine together. In the evening they all meet at Mrs. Vesey's, with the addition of such other company as it is difficult to find elsewhere. Last Tuesday we met; and Mr. Langton and Mr. Walpole were added to the society, for the first time this winter. I rejoiced to find them again, for they are two of the very pleasantest men "that e'er my conversation coped withal." The latter told me a hundred pleasant stories of his father and the *then* court.

Alas! when will the distractions of this land be healed! Nothing but a national judgment can bring us to our senses. Surely the miseries which have visited the devoted Calabrians might open our eyes, and show us that all our evils are chiefly imaginary, or of our own bringing on. War, gambling, and luxury are none of them inflictions from Heaven.

An arrangement of the ministry seems to be as far off as ever, and I am tired of writing, hearing, and undesignedly circulating untruths on this undecided subject. The news that was true at the beginning of one's page proves false before one has reached the bottom, and one can hardly catch, ere it falls, the arrangement of the minute.

I wish you could see Hampton at this moment; I think there never was greater perfection of beauty; so clean, so green, so flowery, so bowery! We dined the other day at Strawberry Hill, and passed as delightful a day as elegant literature, high breeding, and lively wit can afford. As I was the greatest stranger, Mr. Walpole devoted himself to my amusement with great politeness, but I have so little of virtù and antiquarianism about me that I really felt myself quite unworthy of all the trouble he took for me.

Very shortly after Miss H. More's return to Bristol, in June, 1783, she received a summons from her friend Mrs. Kennicott, at Oxford, who was anxious for her assistance and consolation under the very afflicting event of Dr. Kennicott's being attacked with a dangerous illness.

To her sister.

Oxford, August 19, 1783.

My last will have prepared you to expect the contents of this letter. Dear Dr. Kennicott expired yesterday, about four o'clock in the afternoon. I saw him breathe his last. The servants, though there were six of them, were afraid to stay in the room without me. I have got her away from him down stairs, and for the last two hours ran continually up and down, from the afflicted wife to the expiring husband, she all the time knowing he was in the last agonies. Yet, when I came to break it to her, she bore it with the utmost fortitude. She has been very composed ever since; indeed she is a true Christian heroine. The Dean of Christ Church has just been to say that in a quarter of an hour the great bell is to toll. I have told her of it, and she is now looking out a book for me to read during that time.

Adieu. I hear the bell—my task begins.*

Oxford, August 23, 1783.

My excellent friend was buried on Thursday afternoon, in Christ Church, close to Bishop Berkeley. Mrs. Kennicott made it a point that I should go to see this last sad office performed. I objected to leaving her alone for so long a time, but her strength of mind overruled this objection. The choir service was awful, almost beyond bearing; and the dean† read the prayers in a manner most solemn and impressive. I shall stay while I have any chance of being useful to the afflicted widow. Thus closed a life, the last thirty years of which was honourably spent in collating the Hebrew Scriptures. One now reflects, with peculiar pleasure, that, among other disinterested actions, he resigned a valuable living, because his learned occupation would not allow him to reside upon it.

What substantial comfort and satisfaction must not the testimony which our departed friend was enabled to bear to the

* Miss Hannah More used to repeat, from her friend Mrs. Kennicott, a little anecdote of Dr. Kennicott, which strikingly proves how much the love of the sacred volume grows with its perusal. During the time he was employed on his Polyglot Bible, it was her constant office, in their daily airings, to read to him those different portions to which his immediate attention was called. When preparing for their ride, the day after this great work was completed, upon her asking him what book she should now take, "Oh," exclaimed he, "let us begin the Bible."

† Dr. Jackson.

truth of the Holy Scriptures, afford to those who lean upon them as the only anchor of their soul. When Dr. K. had an audience of the king to present his work, his majesty asked him, What upon the whole had been the result of his laborious and learned investigation? To which he replied, That he had found some grammatical errors, and many variations, in the different texts; but not one which in the smallest degree affected any article of faith or practice. When I retired to my chamber, I drew up a hasty, but faithful sketch of the character of my departed friend, while it was fresh in my recollection, which I enclose.

A HASTY SKETCH OF THE CHARACTER OF DR. KENNICOTT.

Of his acknowledged learning I shall say nothing, for obvious reasons; for to appreciate the learning of *others* it is necessary to possess no inconsiderable portion of it *one's self*; "what light is, 'tis only light can show." But I have heard the best judges say, that his Critical Researches were original, sagacious, and acute; and that he considerably enriched the treasury of sacred literature. He had a clear, strong, distinguishing head, and so great a precision in his own ideas, that he made himself intelligible to common apprehensions on subjects which they hardly expected to understand. He sanctified his talents by a noble application of them to the best of purposes, the elucidation of those divine writings which were the invariable rule of his faith and practice. He tempered the most ardent zeal for his own opinions with the mildest charity for those of other men. Nothing could exclude any human being from his heart but vice and infidelity; and even those could not shut them out from his pity and his prayers. As every virtue is defective unless the *opposite* one is possessed in an equal degree, so the liveliness of his zeal can never be considered in so instructive a light as when contrasted with his constancy and his perseverance. His friendships were as animated as his resentments were placable. The most distinguished persons of the age were his friends and associates; and his *particular* attachments were to those who to great talents added great virtues. He was scrupulously conscientious, and disinterested *almost* to imprudence. The most minute exactness, the strictest love of order, and the closest habits of accuracy distinguished the smaller no less than the greater parts of his life. Pain could not subdue his patience, nor prosperity weaken his principles. He had a genuine simplicity of manners, which, flowing from a sweet temper and an excellent heart, sat infinitely better upon *him* than the artificial refinements of what is called good-breeding would have done. The severe studies and the intense sufferings which almost divided his life between them, could never eclipse the gayety of his temper, or shade the mirthful cast of his mind.

As nothing catches such strong hold of the affections as the small parts of great characters, so, while I am now writing a thousand sayings of harmless pleasantry and scenes of innocent cheerfulness, fill my heart with recollections so softening as to overpower those great circumstances which would at this moment occupy the minds of wiser and better persons. He had a just sense of the value of his literary labours; but he was *vain* only of his wife: she was the object, not only of his *affection*, but of his *pride;* and he loved her as much from *taste* as from *tenderness*. She was to him hands, and feet, and eyes, and ears, and intellect. If any ingenious thing was said in company, he never perfectly relished it till she related it to him:

> "His Anna, the relater, he preferred
> Before an angel."

There are certain ladies who, merely from being faithful or frugal, are reckoned *excellent wives*, and who, indeed, make a man every thing but *happy*. They acquit themselves, perhaps, of the *great* points of duty, but in so ungracious a way as clearly proves that they do not find their *pleasure* in it. Lest their account of merit should run too high, they allow themselves to be unpleasant in proportion as they are useful, not considering that it is almost the worst sort of domestic immorality to be *disagreeable*. This was not the case with this lady; she probably *lengthened* her husband's life by her attentions, and certainly *gladdened* it by her prudence, her understanding, and her gentleness. And it is her peculiar praise, that she took the pains to acquire a *certain knowledge*,* from which she could derive neither pleasure nor fame, merely to be useful to *him*.

Oxford, August 21, 1783.—This imperfect character of an excellent man was drawn by one who affectionately esteemed him; who two days ago, heard from him the *groan which could not be repeated*, and who is just now going to see him deposited in the *grave*. May the recollection of that awful scene long rescue her heart from the vanity and weakness to which it is too subject!

From Miss H. More to Mrs. E. Carter.

Christ Church, Oxford, 1783.

A thousand thanks, my dear Mrs. Carter, both from Mrs. Kennicott and myself, for your very obliging and friendly inquiries. I did not receive your letter till Friday, and yesterday there was no post, or I should have testified our acknowledgments sooner. We have, indeed, had a most distressful and affecting scene. I have lost a most excellent friend, and poor Mrs. Kennicott the best of husbands. His illness was linger-

* The Hebrew language.

ing, but not judged to be hopeless till within a few days before we lost him. I saw him breathe his last, and you, my dear friend, who know my weakness of mind, and the agitation of spirits to which I am subject, will feel for my situation, and for what I endured when I had to reveal to her the news of his death; for I had forced her out of the room some hours before. But her fortitude made me ashamed of myself: I never saw courage so great, grounded upon principles so good. She feels the sincerest sorrow, but without any mixture of weakness, and she yields the most lively proof that the divine consolations are, indeed, neither *few nor small*. She is preparing, with the utmost composure, to leave this fine residence, so suitable to her taste and to her regular orderly mind; for she is formed for the sober dignity of academical life: but she seems quite indifferent to all these outward things; and that part of the change which would occupy the hearts of some women she does not even think of. I intend staying with her about another week, soon after which she proposes to leave this place.

I have to thank you, my dear madam, for a delightful letter which I received at Bristol, and was called away hither just as I was about to answer it, and to condole with you on the misfortunes Mr. Carter had sustained. Poor Dr. Wheeler too! but don't you pity the excellent Bishop of London? He sent off an express as soon as his daughter died, to hasten Dr. Wheeler up to be with and console him; an express from the doctor's sister to say he was dead met the bishop's messenger on the road. Such is this world, and so the fashion of it passes away!

We are vastly busy, packing, selling, writing, &c.; and perhaps it is good for poor Mrs. Kennicott that she is not allowed a quiet enjoyment of her grief. She desires her kindest compliments to you, and bids me say that she feels very sensibly your goodness to her.

Adieu, my dear madam. I am most faithfully and affectionately yours,

H. More.

From Dr. Horne to Miss H. More.

Ramsgate, 1783.

Madam,

We are truly afflicted on receiving the melancholy intelligence communicated in your favour of the 19th instant, which reached us at this place last night. That it came unexpectedly I cannot say, as a letter from Mrs. Price had thrown us into a state of awful suspense, and prepared us to hear the worst. Indeed, for some time past I have not been able to flatter myself with the hope that Dr. Kennicott's life could be of any long duration, as I know the gentlemen of the faculty

looked upon his restoration, brought about last year by the Bath waters, to have been merely temporary, and deemed it impossible that his constitution, strong as it was, could stand against the violent and repeated attacks of disease.

To trouble Mrs. Kennicott with a long letter on the usual topics of consolation would be doing her very great injustice. Her internal resources are mighty. In the most trying situations of life she has discharged her duties in a manner which has done great honour to her sex, and reflected lustre on her religion. With such a conscience, and the assistance of a friend like yourself, what can happen that she will not be more than equal to? What more can be added, save that which ever will be added—the Divine blessing? That it may accompany and direct you both, wherever you go and whatever you do, is the sincere and fervent wish and prayer of Mrs. Horne, and of him who is, with the highest esteem,

Your most faithful
and obedient servant,
G. HORNE.

The following six letters will introduce to the reader one of Miss Hannah More's most interesting, amiable, and intelligent correspondents.

Miss H. More to William W. Pepys, Esq.*

Bristol, July 24.

I have been always intending to answer your letter when I could find a handsome occasion; and such an occasion I have now *found* or *made*. *Le voici.*

I have been filling up the vacant hours of my convalescence in scribbling a parcel of idle verses, with which I hope to divert our dear Mrs. Vesey, in her banishment from London. But as I wish to puzzle her (and right easy is the task), I would not send them directly from hence, as the post-mark would have been at once a *coup de lumiere*. I have one frank to you and one to Miss Hamilton, neither of which will hold the *whole*, so I send half to you, and the other half to her by the same post, but I have been wicked enough to divide them in such a manner that neither part will make sense without the other. *She* is likewise directed not to open *hers* till you call upon her, and I am malicious enough to divert myself with the idea that one or other of you will probably be out of town, and in that case there will be a fine philosophical call on you to suspend your curiosity. The only way I had to secure your honesty was to put it out of your power to cheat, by making it useless to break open the enclosed till you get to Miss H. I wish you to read it to *her;* and then to read it to yourself, *critically*, "with all the malice of a friend." I wish I could

* Afterward Sir W. W. Pepys.

have as firm a reliance on your sincerity as I have upon your taste; but you gave me at Hampton one proof that you *can* be sincere, and here is a fresh demand upon you for *farther* proofs.

After having made such corrections as you see proper, you will send the verses off to Mrs. V., without the smallest intimation from whence they came. At the same time, on another scrap of paper you will mark down for me what alterations you have made, that I may insert them in my copy. I intended only a few lines, but it grew into length, maugre all my endeavours, as slight and worthless things have a wonderful facility in growing. In vain did I cut off lines in one part; like the heads of the monster, "one would bourgeon where another fell." Do not make the least scruple of striking out any improper or *singularly* flimsy couplet.

I write to Mrs. V. so seldom, and her sight is so indifferent, that I do not think she will recollect my handwriting.

This scrawl, you will allow, contains nearly as much egotism as one of Mr. Maty's Reviews. When you see the scrape you are brought into by that (to you) fatal frankness about the vases at Hampton, you will be apt to regret that *escape* of honesty, for without it you would not have had this torment.

I am in such raptures with *Les Jardins*, by L'Abbé de L'Isle, which I have just read for the first time, that I am half-tempted to revoke the insolent things I have been saying all my life, against almost all French poetry, except Boileau's. Pray how do you like Les Jardins?

From Mr. Pepys to H. More.

Wimpole-street, July 29, 1783.

Very clever, witty, pleasant, and playful; I like it excessively, and have read it over and over again with fresh pleasure. By great good luck your ingenious malice was disappointed, and instead of plaguing us both, you procured us a very great and unexpected pleasure in reading it over together on Monday, in Wimpole-street. I am at a loss to point out what I like best in it, as it is *full* of the best-humoured wit and most elegant compliment; but what made the greatest impression on my fancy was that admirable turn of giving Mrs. Vesey the preference to any philosopher who should *square* the *circle*. I am sure everybody will say of that as Lord Mount Edgcumbe said of Mrs. W.'s Epigram, "That he was sure he had made it himself, but had forgotten it." To prevent the possibility of Mrs. Vesey's knowing the hand, Mrs. Pepys transcribed it and sent her the copy. Miss Hamilton and I have had a long piece of casuistry together; I say, that as I had no injunction against giving a copy, I see no reason why I might not delight Mrs. Montagu or Mrs. Walsingham, and the chosen few now at Burleigh, with a sight of

it; but Miss H—— has raised in me fresh scruples of conscience, that much as I should like to give Mrs. Walsingham and her friends pleasure, I dread so much giving you any cause of complaint that I have not ventured to do it.

As to suggesting any corrections, I do assure you, in sober sadness, that I am the very worst fellow in the world to apply to: for either I am so delighted with a composition as not to be able (for a long time at least) to consider it critically, or else I take so little pleasure in it as not to think it worth the pains of criticism. Which of the two is the case with me at present I leave you to guess.

We were doubtful, whether, as you had mentioned Cato, Hortensius, Catiline, Lentulus, and Roscius, from some resemblance of *character*, not of *name*,—whether, I say, the calling him afterward *Horace* is quite of a piece with the idea which suggested the other names? But this I mention, rather to give you the most *decisive* proof of my integrity, than for any other reason, because it is a line the whole of which I like best as it stands. Your never-failing gratitude in first mentioning Roscius is delightful, and, added to a *thousand* other traits in it, serves greatly to increase the regard and admiration of your highly honoured and obliged

LÆLIUS.

Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Bristol, August 4, 1783.

I never was guilty of over-refinement in my life, but it failed to answer the end. Here is Miss Hamilton *so* jealous that *she* was forbidden to take a copy, and no such bargain was made with *you!* I protest I thought I was doing the most delicate thing in the world, in not seeming to imagine you would want one. I acted in conformity to a favourite old couplet of mine,

> Perhaps to be forbid may tempt one
> To wish for what one never dream'd on.

I knew well that Miss H. would eagerly fall on any thing in which *rhyme* or *I* was concerned; but that *you* should gravely think of sitting down to copy nineteen pages of nonsense verses, I confess I was too modest to conjecture; and so I have written to Miss H. in answer to her philippic against my supposed partiality.

Your criticisms are perfectly just. We must banish *Horace*. I confess I had been so much in the habit of seeing him and *Lælius* together, that they presented themselves to my mind spontaneously. I desire you will elect a new colleague. What say you to Atticus? A learned, amiable, and tall friend of yours will be no bad representative of him. "The *urn* of

Belvidere," on revision, I do not like; urn is a pretty word, and its prettiness seduced me; but it does not convey the meaning; it rather gives the idea of a lover weeping over the ashes of a departed mistress. I propose to read it thus:—

> Save when he steals to drop a tear,
> Frequent, o'er sad Calista's bier,
> Or mourn the wrongs of Belvidere.

I do not like triplets though, and would never use them but in very light compositions.

In the third line from the last, for *wisdom* read *genius*. There are several other tautologies, which I beg you to correct.

You seem so resolved to *take* the leave I did not mean to *give*, that I suppose I should now get nothing by withholding it but the heaviest charge of affectation. I am, however, very serious, and very unaffected, when I enjoin you to confine the copies you give to Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Walsingham, with strict injunctions to them not to give it away. I have a terror of newspapers, from which I have found, by sad experience, that no mediocrity can secure one: so no safety even for me.

I do confess I should have been sadly mortified had I been so ill a painter that you had not known all my Romans. But I dare say, like other artists, I should have comforted myself that the defect was in the eye of the judges, rather than in my own pencil.

The *Guardian* I was so anxious to know your opinion about is the fortieth of the first volume. I have *some* reason to think I am in the wrong, as I have all the world against me: but the whole criticism appears to me a burlesque. That a writer of so pure a taste could be in earnest when he talks of the elegance of Diggon Davy, and exalts all that trash of Phillips's, whose simplicity is silliness, I cannot bring myself to believe. But when he says that *Hobbinol* and *Lobbin* are names agreeable to the delicacy of an English ear, *j'y perds mon Latin*.

From Mr. Pepys to Miss H. More.

Tunbridge Wells, August 13, 1783.

Thanks for your license, but a fig for your restrictions; though I certainly shall not transgress them without your leave. But when you must know that not only every reading and writing miss at Margate has got a copy of them, but that the copies of them are, by this time, dispersed over every part of the kingdom, to all their correspondents, what possible reason could there be to lay me or any of your friends under any restraint? The company in which you placed me did me so much honour, that I am extremely unwilling to part with my colleague: but I agree with you that if I *must* be separated from him, you could not have thought of a better substitute.

However, I am desirous of keeping *him* if I can, though it should put you to the expense of a triplet, for the sake of hooking them both in. You would have been entertained with Miss Hamilton's eager curiosity to discover who Lælius was. She did not know my passion for good society (though I think she must have discovered somewhat of it at Hampton), and therefore I had a fine opportunity of teasing her, by telling her that Lælius had had the happiness of conversing with her—was much her admirer, &c. *Atticus* is an admirable name for Langton; both in respect of his moderation and impartiality about political questions, and also because he is, and wishes to be, distinguished for his *Greek* literature: but you must, if you can, make a trio of us.

I have read the poem over twenty times, and really think it a composition of first-rate merit of its kind. As you have quite established your character with me for that most rare indication of a great mind, the hearing, without offence, any line or word pointed out for alteration, I have run the risk of putting down, as it occurred, any thing that in the least struck me as capable of being improved. If you find you begin to dislike me for it, repent of the sensation as soon as you can, and reinstate me in your favour by recollecting the assurance which I gave you, that you are almost the only person with whom I was ever hardy enough to try the experiment.

If they do not bring dinner I shall never leave off writing, because it puts me so much in mind of *talking* to you, and you recollect that I was not easily tired of *that*. I do not venture to recommend Blair's Lectures, because I have begun only the second volume, and have not made much progress in *that*; but as far as relates to poetry, I think you will be pleased with him; except that after saying, in the second volume, page 254, that in point of poetical fire and original genius, *Milton* and Shakspeare are inferior to no poets in any age; he says in page 257, that in epic poetry Homer and Virgil, to this day, stand not within many degrees of any rival. Does not this seem a little like contradiction? At least, is it not rather too hard upon Milton?

Adieu, ever yours,
W. W. Pepys.

From the same to the same.

Tunbridge Wells, September 21, 1783.

Though I am much afraid that I frightened you by the length of my letter on the 19th of last month (for I will not do you so much injustice as to think that I disgusted you by the freedom of my remarks), yet as our friend Mrs. Boscawen tells me that she is going to write to you in a cover, and offers me a place in it if I have any thing to say, I cannot resist the temptation of thanking you for those exquisitely beautiful lines

upon Attention, which you were so good as to send by Miss Hamilton, and which make such an admirable conclusion to the charming "Bas Bleu:"—

> "Mute Angel! yes, thy looks dispense
> The silence of intelligence,"

are beyond all praise, and form such a picture, with the addition of the next two lines, that as soon as I see Mrs. Walsingham, I shall request of her to paint Attention from your beautiful design. I have had the greatest success in disseminating your fame among some other good judges at this place, to whom I have read the "Bas Bleu" with uncommon effect; and every creature whose opinion was worth having has agreed with me in thinking it a performance of very extraordinary merit. Lady D—— is charmed with it; and as she had not seen the lines upon Attention, I thought myself very fortunate in being the first to communicate them to her.

I am sorry to hear from Mrs. Boscawen that you have of late been engaged in such a melancholy scene at Oxford; but as I begin to take an interest (and that rather a warm one) in what you do, I was pleased to hear of your being engaged in one of the most generous, because the most painful, acts of friendship. I know little of Mrs. Kennicott, but had so much regard for her poor brother, that I was very glad to hear that she had the consolation of such a friend in her affliction. Your having been engaged in such scenes is more than a sufficient reason with me for your not having made use of the cover I had the effrontery to send you. Do tell me all that you can about yourself, though you are the worst person in the world to apply to for that intelligence.

Pray come either to London or near it, before the annual return of the vertigo with which everybody is infected after the birthday, and give me an opportunity of telling you, as soon as may be, in person, how much

I am yours,

W. W. PEPYS.

From the same to the same.

Tunbridge Wells, October 10th, 1783.

Our letters crossed each other on the road, but by no means at equal distance from us, for no sooner had Mrs. Boscawen carried off my letter in her chaise, than I was favoured with yours by one of those gentlemen who Madame Sevigné observes are so obliging as to "se faire crotter jusqu'au yeux," to keep up the intercourse of friends at a distance. I desire you will not take the trouble of transcribing the "Bas Bleu," as I promise myself a very pleasant hour or two in looking it over together with you as soon as we can meet; and tran-

scribing must be to you a dreadful task! I wish I knew when to expect you. You lose the most sociable month in London by not coming till after Christmas. Exclusively of the pleasure I have received from the Bas Bleu, you cannot imagine the degree of *consequence* it has given me with some very agreeable people here, and how much I have risen in their estimation by telling them that *I* was the first person who saw it, and that *I* would read it to them, but that no copy of it could be possibly given.

I think it most probable that I shall stay here till the 5th of November, when, alas! I must return to the wrangling of lawyers, and exchange my exhilarating rides and luxurious reading for noise and sin, sea-coal and parchment; *en attendant*, I feel quite overflowing with gratitude for the happiness I have enjoyed here for ten weeks. My family and self are well, and as yet protected from all those calamities which "flesh is heir to." Though I love your letters as the next best thing to your company, yet I do beseech you not to write unless you should happen to be in the humour for it.

Yours ever,

W. W. PEPYS.

From Mrs. Barbauld to Miss H. More.

Palegrove, Nov. 1783.

DEAR MADAM,

If any one were to ask me whether Miss More and Mrs. Barbauld correspond, I should say we correspond, I hope, in sentiments, in inclinations, in affection; but with the pen I really cannot say we do. Her pen is better employed, and mine, alas! is seldom employed at all but in the routine of business. I cannot, however, always repress the desire of hearing how you do, and of letting you know there is one in a corner of Norfolk whose heart preserves in their full glow the love and esteem with which you have long ago inspired it. These sentiments have received a fresh accession of strength by the sight of your "Sacred Dramas," a work I have expected with impatience ever since you favoured me with a peep at Moses. It is too late, my dear Miss More, to compliment you on the execution of your pleasing plan, but you must give me leave to mention how sensibly I was touched with pleasure on seeing the tribute you have paid to friendship, in the obliging lines which soon caught my eye in the sweet poem annexed to the Dramas. It was a sensible mortification to me that I did not meet you in London last Christmas; perhaps I shall be more fortunate this vacation. We mean to spend part of it at Bristol, at Mr. Estlin's; and if you are in Bristol then, I need not say how great an addition it will be to the happiness we hope to enjoy there.

We have lately been reading Mr. Soame Jenyns's Essays;

you have seen them, no doubt. I think, too, that you will agree with me in pronouncing many of them very ingenious and very whimsical. What, for instance, do you think of the idea of coming into this world to be punished for old offences? How would it sound, think you, if people were to date—in the twentieth year of my imprisonment, from my cell in such a place! What discomfort must it be to a poor creature, whose lot is poverty and affliction here, instead of promising himself his portion of good things hereafter, to think that he is only paying off old scores. If Mr. Soame Jenyns has the gout, for instance, as many worthy people have, it must be pleasant to hear the corollaries he cannot but deduce from it.

But I run on till I am afraid I shall oblige you to try to recollect some peccadillo in your pre-existent state, for which you are troubled with this letter; therefore, that I may not lie heavy upon your conscience, as well as exercise your patience, I will bid you adieu, after delivering Mr. Barbauld's compliments and best wishes.

I am, my dear madam,
Your affectionate friend,
and obedient servant,
A. L. BARBAULD.

We pass over the two or three months Miss H. More spent at Hampton this winter, in unvaried tranquillity, and pass on till we find her in the ensuing spring at the Adelphi; from which place we find her first letter to her sister, dated

Adelphi, March 8, 1784.

I have been in town some days, but had not time to write before, because, as the Duchess of Gordon told the queen, "'tis nothing but fruz, fruz all day, and rap, rap all *neet*." Being here alone, I have dined out almost every day. This total change of scene, from the quiet, reading, contemplative life I have been so much used to, gave me headaches at first; but now I am a little seasoned to the hot rooms, I am very well again. One of my engagements was to the Bishop of Chester's. It was a very pleasant party.

Mr. and Mrs. Soame Jenyns, gay, gallant, and young as ever, are really delectable to behold, so fond of each other, and so free from characteristic infirmities; I do not know such another pair. I think they make up between them about 165 years. There is this peculiarity in Mr. Jenyns's character, that though he has the worst opinion of human nature, he has the greatest kindness for the individuals who compose it; and such a conformity in his temper to every thing and everybody in common things, that he seems equally pleased in societies the most opposite. Whatever skepticism he might once have been charged with, I believe him now to be a real believer: the doubts entertained by some persons of his sincerity ap-

pear in his late work on the Internal Evidence of Christianity to be quite unfounded. I think him very sincere; but not having been long acquainted with the doctrines of revelation, the novelty of them has excited his love of paradox. The book is very ingenious; perhaps he brings rather too much ingenuity into his religion. I know, however, an instance in which this little work has converted a philosophical infidel, who had previously read all that had been written on the subject without effect.

We dined on Thursday at the Bishop of Salisbury's. I was a little sad at first, to think of the old party's being so broken up. We had only the Bishop of Chester and Mrs. Bryant who had belonged to it. There was other company, and too fine a dinner.

Only think of this being Friday, and no Lælius mentioned.* We did not meet till that day at dinner, at Mrs. Montagu's, and then there were such wonderments, and astonishments, and lamentations, that we had not met since last year. We were fifteen in company. Mr. Langton was one. I am sure you will honour him, when I tell you he is come on purpose to stay with Dr. Johnson, and that during his illness. He has taken a little lodging in Fleet-street, in order to be near, to devote himself to him. He has as much goodness as learning, and that is saying a bold thing of one of the first Greek scholars we have.

Mr. Locke has just sent me a curiosity, the first number of the London Chronicle, written by Johnson, an excellent paper, and very characteristic of the author. Mrs. Carter breakfasted with me on Monday. I saw the Lady Windsors the other night at a great assembly at Lady Rothes, which was so hot, so crowded, and so fine, that I never passed a more dull, unpleasant evening. I am absolutely resolved I will go to such parties no more. How I grudged the waste of time, to pass an evening squeezed to death among a parcel of fine idle people, many of whom care as little for me as I do for them; and where it is impossible to have any thing worthy of being called conversation. It was not only vanity, but vexation of spirit; but one is drawn in by assurances of "a very small party."

As politics spoil all conversation, Mr. Walpole, the other night, proposed that everybody should forfeit half a crown who said any thing tending to introduce the idea either of *ministers* or *opposition*. I added, that whoever even mentioned *pit-coal*, or a *fox-skin muff*, should be considered as guilty; and it was accordingly voted.

* Sir William Pepys.

From the same to the same.

Holywell House, St. Alban's, March, 1784.

I imagine this date will puzzle you a little, for I believe I forgot to tell you that Lady Spencer had given us an invitation to spend a week with her. I have no reason to regret the expedition; for, to say nothing of the country, the air has done me much good. I have been out ever since breakfast, exploring the environs of this old town, and tracing the remains of the ancient city of Verulam. There is little of the Roman remains to see, but there is a great deal to imagine, and that is full as well, or perhaps better; but what has delighted me much more was to see a statue cut out of one piece of marble, of the wisest, brightest (I will not add Pope's other epithet) of mankind; you will know that I mean the great prophet of science, my Lord Bacon. I was also vastly pleased with seeing his noble old house, and gallery full of delightful original pictures of Elizabeth's court. The venerable mansion is, alas! about to be pulled down. Holywell House, where I now am, is going to be repaired. It is, at present, a very cold one, though my lady has just told me there are twenty fires in it. It was built by Sarah Duchess of Marlborough, whose beautiful form is looking down upon me while I write. By this picture, she must have been a most lovely woman. Lady Spencer is very composed and cheerful, lives with great regularity, and abounds in charitable actions. She has a constant succession of friends in her house. There is no ceremony or form of any kind, as you will believe, when I tell you that I have not changed my dress till to-day, though we have had many noble visiters. I had intended to call on Dr. Cotton, but he is grown very old, and I was afraid he would not recollect me. Georgiana Shipley is here, and is my walking companion; and the other day we took a ride of twenty miles to a sale of books. We were diverted with bidding for lots for other people, without knowing what they contained, and brought home above a hundred little ragged old books for Lady S., Lord Jersey, &c. The diversion was, to pick out all that was ridiculous in our lots and put into theirs. I employed myself, while I was here, in knitting a pair of stockings for one of Mrs. Pepys's children; I enclose a copy of the letter which I sent with them.

To Mrs. (afterward Lady) Pepys.

THE BAS BLANC.

DEAR MADAM,

I beg leave to dedicate the enclosed work, the fruit of a few days' leisure at St. Alban's, to either of your little children, of

whose capacity of receiving it you will be the best judge upon trial, for there is a certain fitness, without which the best works are of little value. Though it is so far of a moral cast that its chief end is utility, yet I hope that the child will be able to run through it with pleasure. I may say, without vanity, that it is formed upon the precepts of the great masters of the Epopœa, with but few exceptions. The subject is simple, but it has a beginning, middle, and end. The exordium is the natural introduction by which you are let into the whole work. The middle, I trust, is free from any unnatural tumor or inflation, and the end from any disproportionate littleness. I have avoided bringing about the catastrophe too suddenly, as I know that would hurt him at whose feet I lay it: for the same reason, I took care to shun too pointed a conclusion, still reserving my greatest acuteness for this part of my subject. I had materials for a much longer work, but the art to stop has always appeared to me to be no less the great secret of a poet than the art to blot; and whoever peruses this work will see that I could not have added another line, without such an unravelling as would have greatly perplexed the conclusion. My chief care has been to unite the two great essentials of composition, ease and strength. I do not pretend to have paid any great attention to the passions, and yet I hope my work will not be found deficient either in warmth or softness; but these will be better felt than expressed. Now and then, partly from negligence and partly from tenuity, I have broken the thread of my narration, but have pieced it so happily, that none but the eye of a professor, which looks into the interior, will detect it: and the initiated are generally candid, because they are in the secret. What little ornament there is, I have bestowed, not injudiciously I trow, on the slenderest part. You will find but one episode, and even that does not obstruct the progress of the main subject; and for parallels, I will be bold to say that Plutarch does not furnish one so perfect. The rare felicity of this species of composition is the bold attempt to unite poetry with mechanics, for which see the clock-work in the third section. As all innovation is a proof of a false taste, or a fantastic vanity, I was contented to use the old machinery in working up this piece. I have taken care not to overlay the severe simplicity of the ancients (my great precursors in this walk) with any finery of my own invention; and like other moderns, you will find I have failed only in proportion as I have neglected my model. After all, I wish the work may not be thought too long; but of this he to whose use it is dedicated will be the best judge: his feelings must determine, and that is a decision from which there lies no appeal; for in this case, as in most others, *le tact* is a surer standard than the rules. I beg your pardon for so tedious a preface to so slight a performance; but the subject has been near my heart as often as I have had the work in hand; and as I expect it will long survive

all my other productions, I am desirous to deposite it in the Pepys' collection, humbly hoping, that though neither defaced nor mutilated, it may be found as useful as many a black-letter manuscript of more recondite learning.

I am, my dear madam, &c.

L'AMIE DES ENFANS.

To her sister.

Adelphi, 1784.

I have been falsely assuring everybody that there was no contest, but that the old members stood for Bristol. And yet we are such fools as to read history, and believe it too, when we can't come at the truth of what is passing in our own town. A propos of elections—I had like to have got into a fine scrape the other night. I was going to pass the evening at Mrs. Cole's, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. I went in a chair; they carried me through Covent Garden: a number of people, as I went along, desired the men not to go through the Garden, as there were a hundred armed men who, suspecting every chairman belonged to Brookes's, would fall upon us. In spite of my entreaties, the men would have persisted; but a stranger, out of humanity, made them set me down, and the shrieks of the wounded, for there was a terrible battle, intimidated the chairmen, who at last were prevailed upon to carry me another way. A vast number of people followed me, crying out, "It is Mrs. Fox: none but Mr. Fox's wife would dare to come into Covent Garden in a chair; she is going to canvass in the dark." Though not a little frightened, I laughed heartily at this, but shall stir no more in a chair for some time. Mrs. Garrick is so interested for Pitt, that we send the man every day to wait the close of the poll, and to bring us the numbers. I do not believe she could eat her dinner without knowing how matters go. I, too, try to be interested, and sometimes do really act solicitude very well; but, unluckily for my principles, I met Fox canvassing the other day, and he looked so sensible and agreeable, that if I had not turned my eyes another way, I believe it would have been all over with me.

I have got a new admirer, and we flirt together prodigiously; it is the famous General Oglethorpe, perhaps the most remarkable man of his time. He was foster-brother to the Pretender, and is much above ninety years old; the finest figure you ever saw. He perfectly realizes all my ideas of Nestor. His literature is great, his knowledge of the world extensive, and his faculties as bright as ever; he is one of the three persons still living who were mentioned by Pope: Lord Mansfield and Lord Marchmont are the other two. He was the intimate friend of Southern, the tragic poet, and all the wits of that time. He is perhaps the oldest man of a *gentleman* living. I went to see him the other day, and he would have entertained

me by repeating passages from Sir Eldred. He is quite a preux chevalier, heroic, romantic, and full of the old gallantry. On Monday I dined at Lady Middleton's, and in the evening went to Mrs. Ord's, where there was every thing delectable in the blue way. Mr. Walpole and I fought over the old ground,—Pope against Dryden,—and Mrs. Montagu backed him; but I would not give up.

I wish Sally had been in my place to-night; she would have enjoyed it, and I could have spared it. I have just returned from Mrs. Montagu's, where I sat close by Lord Rodney, crowned with laurel and glory. Mrs. Pepys proposed that all the women in the room should go up and salute him, and wanted me to begin; I professed that I would willingly be the second, but who would be the first? Nobody choosing to undertake it, so fine a project fell to the ground. He looks more like a delicate feeble man of quality than a hero.

April, 1784.

Did I tell you what a pleasant breakfast I had at Miss Hamilton's, where I met Lord Stormont by appointment? He was vastly agreeable. But as we had Mr. de Luc, and Sir William Hamilton, we had a little too much of virtu, and Calabria, and Vesuvius, all which was more interesting to them than to his lordship and me. Miss Hamilton told us a pleasant anecdote of Hutton, the Moravian, who has the honour of being occasionally admitted to the royal breakfast-table. "Hutton," said the king to him one morning, "is it true that you Moravians marry without any previous knowledge of each other?" "Yes, may it please your majesty," returned Hutton; "our marriages are *quite royal*." We had at dinner, on Saturday, the Abbé Grant, from Rome, Sir William Hamilton, Sir Joshua, Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Vesey, Mrs. Carter, Miss Hamilton, and young Montagu, an amiable and agreeable young man. I think his excellent aunt judges very rightly in not sending him abroad for a year or two: he will learn as much from her conversation, and see as much good company in her house, as he could do in any foreign city in the world, and with greater safety to his morals. But to return to the company: in the evening we had Mrs. Walsingham, the Jenynses, the Pepyses, the Shipleys, Lady Rothes, Mrs. Ord, the Burneys, Mr. Walpole,—in short, I think we had above thirty, all as agreeable people as one would wish to see; and yet, being, as it were, at home, I was obliged to divide myself to avoid the censure of addicting myself to favourites, so that I could not pick up much amusement, and indeed Mr. Walpole told me he never saw me so disagreeable; he wished I would be rude and entertaining; so I promised him I would the next time.

I am just returned from a very great dinner at Mrs. Montagu's; but the naughty king robbed us again of Mr. Smelt.

Coleman dined with us, and inquired for you all. I cannot spare time to write another word, as I am very busy copying the Bas Bleu for the king, who desires to have it. Yesterday Dr. Heberden made me a very long and kind visit, and said civil things about the Bas Bleu. He seems eager to have it printed, and tried to combat all my reasons, which I told him were too good to give up. I had a very civil note from Johnson about a week since; it was written in good spirits; and, as it was a volunteer, and not an answer, it looks as if he were really better. He tells me he longs to see me, to praise the Bas Bleu as much as envy can praise. There's for you!

April, 1784.

Did I tell you I went to see Dr. Johnson? Miss Monckton carried me, and we paid him a very long visit. He received me with the greatest kindness and affection; and as to the Bas Bleu, all the flattery I ever received from everybody together would not make up his sum. He said,—but I seriously insist you do not tell anybody, for I am ashamed of writing it even to you;—he said, there was no name in poetry that might not be glad to own it.* You cannot imagine how I stared; all this from Johnson, that parsimonious praiser! I told him I was delighted at his approbation; he answered quite characteristically, "And so you may, for I give you the opinion of a man who does not rate his judgment in these things very low, I can tell you."

We had a good party at the Bishop of St. Asaph's a few nights ago. Among the chief talkers was Mr. Erskine; he has amazing abilities, but to me he is rather brilliant than pleasant. His animation is vehemence; and he contrives to make the conversation fall too much on himself—a sure way not to be agreeable in mixed conversation. It is not natural that I should much commend his taste in letters, because he and I disagreed on the few subjects we started. I confess, however, that that is no proof of his being in the wrong. The bar seems to be a fitter theatre for his talents than the drawing-room, where good-breeding is still more necessary than wit. On Saturday night, Mrs. Garrick and I drank tea with Lælius† and his lady; only a *partie quarrée*, so quiet and comfortable! He read select passages from the poets, and we commented, and criticised, and were chatty and foolish. We have been two months trying to get that quiet evening.

I have told Mrs. Vesey all the fine things you say of your

* Her request was complied with; this passage never was shown to any one. We find a corroboration of this account in Johnson's own letters to Mrs. Thrale; he says, "Miss More has written a poem called the Bas Bleu; which is, in my opinion, a very great performance. It wanders about in manuscript, and surely will soon find its way to Bath."

† Sir William Pepys.

pathetic Recorder,* she agrees with me in thinking him very bright, though a little coarse.

The autumn of this year was passed with her sisters at Bristol.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H More.

1784.

"A friend in need is a friend indeed!" So says the proverb, so says the comedy, and so says your favoured correspondent at Glanvilla, who was sick, waiting for the doctor, when your delightful packet came; but before I proceed, I will tell you, my dear friend, that this sickness is only what goes about, and what one cannot go about with, so that being confined, and having no dear Miss More to make the day seem short whether it rained or shone, I cannot tell you how low and uncomfortable I was, when the sight of your hand-writing revived me, and your extremely pleasant epistle delighted me. Though I have read it often, I cannot recount its particular charms; the pleasant Vesey will be enchanted; you do not insist upon her understanding half of it, but she will understand enough to wish Sir Joshua Reynolds would send her a statuary from the Royal Academy to put you up upon a pedestal in the inmost niche of her interior cabinet. En attendant, I am proud to think what a respectable figure I make in my own county of Kent, for all Margate have read these pretty compliments before now.

I had a visit yesterday from the Pepyses; we made the incomparable "Bas Bleu" the theme of our discourse, the subject of our praise; but I find these classical gentry have a great advantage over such ignoramuses as your humble servant, for having treated Mr. Cole with a perusal of it in my presence, he went into such raptures at the allusions, imitations, &c. over and above the *tout ensemble*, that he wanted to have it proclaimed to the world and printed that minute: he was so charmed, that I let him read it a second time, though his visit was short, and then I carried off my treasure very safe. It is now with Lady Amherst, at her earnest desire to see it, but with a strict injunction that not a line or a word should be copied. If ever you are disposed to take off this embargo, you will let me know.

Your letter, too, called for congratulations in the highest style, on your being elected member of the French Academy; but as no academical oratory or delightful poetry will come to my assistance on this great occasion (and a very great one surely it is), I must be content to tell you plainly that I was much pleased with this distinguished honour conferred on merit

* Richard Burke.

and my dear friend; and that it is my earnest hope that you may long continue to please, to edify, to be admired, esteemed, and honoured both at home and abroad. I have kept the secret inviolable because you bade me; longing however to reveal it to the Hadley party, and to Mr. Cole, who has this minute left me.

I hope you had a pleasant journey home, and halted with Lady Bathurst, and afterward found your family well. I hope to appear to Mrs. Garrick some fine morning in October, but first I must go to Bulstrode and treat my dear Mrs. Delany with "Bas Blue;" perhaps I may sing it to her, for I must tell you of a most ridiculous dream I have had,—so ridiculous that I remember it still. Methought I was required by a very large and respectable company to sing the whole of the "Bas Bleu," which was set to music; in vain I pleaded that I had no voice since I was grown old, and that if I attempted to sing a psalm at church, it was more like purring than singing: I was overruled, *j'éntonnai donc le cantique;* and in the midst of it, who should arrive in a post-chaise from Bristol but Miss H. More, on a visit to the lady of the house; who she was I know not, but I thought how flattering it must be to Miss More, to find so many respectable people listening with the utmost attention to the recital of her composition, even though degraded by the incapacity of the performer. I thought, too, this incident of your arrival had given particular pleasure to Mrs. Garrick, who was one of the auditory, and to whom I said, Madam, I intend to spend the Christmas with you at Hampton. I do not remember she answered, *Dieu ne plaise!* which I should have put into my dream to make it *vraisemblable;* but I suppose I kept everybody in character, and of course did not omit Mrs. Garrick's perfect good-breeding, *mais c'est trop parler de songes.* Let me now come to the reality, that I am, my dear Miss More's truly affectionate and grateful friend,

F. B.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Bristol, 1784.

MY DEAR MADAM,

What a delightful letter did you send me, and how grateful did I feel for it; nay, the pleasant odour still remains upon my mind. It was the more acceptable for being a volunteer; and one always receives a gift with more gratitude than a debt. *Mais le moyen d'ecrire?* with so much company and so many interruptions. Bristol is as *bad* as London, without being as *good*. I have seen a good many of your Kentish friends lately, not one of whom, however, do I include as provoking the above lamentation. Mrs. E. Bouverie, Miss Marsham, Lady Hales, and Lady Plymouth's family. We made such large parties that I fancied myself not in Bristol but London.

Add to all this, that the Provost of Eton and Mrs. Roberts are on a visit at our dean's, which causes visitings, and replies, and rejoinders without end. They press me much to halt for a week at Eton on my road to London; which, as I have never seen Eton or Windsor, I should like very well; but the season opposes every idea of pleasure in seeing places; so if I can I shall retract the promise which in a rash moment I made, and reserve this visit for brighter skies and longer days. I *heartily* accept (my dear madam) your congratulation on the high honour done me by so respectable and learned a body of foreigners; there is, I believe, no greater danger in this uncertain world than that a head that is only tolerably reasonable should be turned with the honours and glories of it. Heaven, however, often, by some interfering providence, prevents it. The very day on which I received *Mes Pancartes Academiciennes*, I was taken ill of a fever, from which, by the aid of blistering, and the whole medical artillery, I am quite recovered; so I beg you will not waste any compassion on me, my dear madam, for "Richard's himself again;" and I am going to confirm my cure by riding on horseback. My time, too, has been much taken up in answering all my letters from France. The gentleman who wrote to me in the name of the academy is a Chevalier de la Maltiere de l'ordre de St. Louis; he has translated Percy and several other of my things into French. He gave me instructions how I was to act, and in what manner I was to write to the whole academy collectively; and what is worse, told me that my letter of thanks, which must be in French, was to be transcribed and preserved in the archives of the academy. Oh! how I wished for l'aimable Hôstesse de Glanvilla at my elbow, to have written this letter for me! My desire of concealing this honour did not spring from any kind of affectation, but from a real and deep consciousness how little claim I had to such a title. Dear Mrs. Vesey was quite delighted with her visit to Glanvilla. Dr. Warren, it seems, has pronounced Mr. Vesey to be, at present, unfit for the voyage to Dublin.

I am glad to learn that poor Johnson was able to dine at Teston last autumn; he looked badly; said it was a heavy stroke, but that it may still please God to restore him. Alas! I doubt it.

I have not had time to read any of Dr. Blair's rhetoric. Bristol has all the bustle of London, and leaves me almost as little time to myself; but one must submit to the disadvantage of an acquaintance too large to be select; yet here are many excellent persons.

Mr. Maty (I think) grows very pert and flippant, and decides with a tone of superiority that I believe I could better bear if he did not write in the first person. Perhaps it is the egotism which offends me; he decides on the literary rank of our amiable bishop as authoritatively as Quintilian could have done, but not quite so wisely.

My five volumes of "Hoole's Ariosto" are just brought me each volume has a very pretty frontispiece, and that I believe is as far as I shall go. I mean no disrespect to the translation, which I take to be a very good one, and people of taste will be glad that English literature is enriched with a good version of so original a poet; but this great but naughty poet must be read, if read at all, in the original.

I have had a great many prints, pamphlets, and other little things sent me from Rouen, by a person who came from thence; but, unluckily for me, he happened to have put a popish prayer-book among my things, which were therefore, by being caught in bad company, all found guilty of popery at Brighthelmstone, and condemned to be burnt, to my great regret, as it will grieve the senders. By this time, my dear madam, I fancy you will be looking towards London, in search of the "human face divine;" which, after all the pleasures of retirement and rural felicity, is not amiss as a change. To hear birds sing one six months, and men talk for the other, is a grateful vicissitude. I hope to get to Mrs. Garrick in December, and to knock some fine morning at a double door in Audley-street, before I take the veil at Hampton; for we really live as quiet and as solitary as nuns; but as it is not *for ever*, I like it prodigiously; particularly as it gives me (and it is the only place that does so) opportunity to indulge my appetite for reading to the full extent of its voracity. I mix light anecdote with grave metaphysics. I read last spring Monsieur de St. Simon, which is easy of digestion, after dinner; and Mr. Locke, which requires the mind and faculties to be broad awake, after tea. Mr. Stewart's new history of Scotland lay on the table, and presented its handsome type to me in vain, till I had finished Mr. Hayley's new work; the poet before the historian is, I think, but lawful precedence, unless for those who are proselytes to Sir Harry Saville's opinion, that poets are the best authors next to those who write prose. My dear madam, I hope all are well who belong to you, from Charles-street to the Land's End.

I am most gratefully yours,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

1784.

I have been an arrant vagabond, my dear madam, since you heard from me last, and have been a transient sojourner in many a hospitable mansion open for the succour of way-worn travellers. As you well know that your friend Mrs. Walsingham is all sense and spirit, you will readily believe that our time passed very pleasantly at Thames Ditton; nothing could surpass her politeness. I said I had never seen an air-balloon; she struck with her magic wand, and lo! a balloon appeared, forty-five feet in circumference; I had a great mind to wish

for an eighty-four gun man-of-war, as I conjecture she keeps them also ready in case her guests should wish for one. My Kentish tour proved in all respects a very pleasant one. Teston and its inhabitants are delightful. Hunton* is indeed a sweet little spot, and our excellent bishop seems to have more true enjoyment, and to possess himself more entirely there than in any other place,

"There contemplation plumes her ruffled wings."

for the smoothest wing will be ruffled by the crowd and pressure of the bustling world. The fortnight I spent with our friend Mrs. Montagu I need not say to you, my dear madam, was passed profitably and pleasantly; as one may say of her, what Johnson has said of somebody else, that "she never opens her mouth but to say *something*." The Primate of Ireland and Sir William Robinson were at Sandleford for the first three or four days after I got thither. I was a little afraid of his grace at first, as he carries a dignity, you know, in his person and *abord*, which excites more respect than is quite consistent with one's ease; but he laid aside his terrors, and was all graciousness and complacency, and condescended to join in the favourite subjects of the two ladies, poetry and criticism; though, if I may hazard a conjecture upon his turn of mind, I should rather think him distinguished for wisdom, and knowledge of men and things in a worldly view, than for any acute wit, or polite literature. He seems, however, to have a general good taste. The great apartment, that was the chapel, is quite in order; and the romantic scenery presented to the eye by the Gothic aisle which fronts the great windows, is very delightful. We enjoyed our moonlight gambols not a little. I could not help regretting that there were no such little amiable gentlefolks as fairies, to people a scene so congenial to their characters: oh, that these sweet tiny intelligences would admit me to some of their merry festivals! I would rather eat a slice of moonshine with Robin Goodfellow, or sip an acorn full of dew with Oberon, than taste the finest supper that ever Weltjie decorated; and you cannot imagine how I envy a pretty Welsh girl I know, because she really believes in the existence and attendance of these little aerial dears. But as a light thought now and then introduces a serious one, it is charming to think that one day we ourselves shall be still less incumbered with body and flesh and sense than even these little incorporeal favourites of mine; and that, without a figure, without poetry, without fancy, and without romance, we shall be all pure intellect. I cannot think without envy how little changing and rarifying Fenelon, and a few others will require, before they become pure sublimated spirits. My appointment at Oxford was to flirt with Dr. Johnson, but he was a recreant

* The little country living of Bishop Porteus.

knight, and had deserted. He had been for a fortnight at the house of my friend Dr. Adams, the head of Pembroke, with Mr. Boswell; but the latter being obliged to go to town, Johnson was not thought well enough to remain behind, and afterward to travel by himself; so that he left my friend's house the very day I got thither, though they told me he did me the honour to be very angry and out of humour, that I did not come so soon as I had promised. I am grieved to find that his mind is still a prey to melancholy, and that the fear of death operates on him to the destruction of his peace. It is grievous, it is unaccountable! He who has the Christian hope upon the best foundation; whose faith is strong, whose morals are irreproachable! But I am willing to ascribe it to bad nerves and bodily disease.

While I was at Oxford, I received so obliging and pressing a letter from Mrs. Barrington, threatening me with the loss of the bishop's blessing if I refused,—that I was prevailed upon to go to Mungewell, though it was rather a retrograde motion. I spent a few days pleasantly, and I hope not unprofitably with them. There happened to be an ordination while I was there, and it was edifying to see the earnest, affectionate, and devotional manner in which the bishop went through that important ceremony. I could not see anybody of Trinity College; but the *general* accounts I could pick up of your young lords were to their honour. The above mentioned circumstances delayed my return hither till two days ago, when I arrived with my friend Mrs. Kennicott, who is come to spend some time with me. The comfort to find all my friends alive and well after an absence of more than eight months, is no small blessing! In the post-chaise, Mrs. K. and I read our worthy friend the Dean of Canterbury's* letters on Infidelity. We have both a high esteem for his worth and parts; but could not help wishing, as we went along, that he had suppressed a great part of this book: it will not add to his reputation, nor (though extremely well-intended) can it do much good. He attacks the infidels in their own way with gayety and humour; but irony is a figure which it requires great skill to manage, and I am sorry to say, he is sometimes low where he intends to be humorous; *au reste*, there is some good argument, and I like almost all the latter part. I am now reading with great appetite Professor White's sermons. It is long since I have met with a more noble, judicious, spirited, and eloquent defence of the Christian religion. His parallel of Christ and Mahomet is drawn with great piety, skill, and temper; this last quality always weighs prodigiously with me. Champions defeat their end when they vilify beyond the truth. Those who say that Mahomet was not a person of very great sagacity, help his cause.

It is now high time to thank you, my dear madam, for your

* Dr. Horne.

very handsome list of subscribers. Do you know that my poor milkwoman has been sent for to Stoke, to visit the Duchess of Beaufort and the Duchess of Rutland; and to Bath, to Lady Spencer, Mrs. Montagu, &c.? I hope all these honours will not turn her head, and indispose her for her humble occupations. I would rather have her *served* than *flattered*. Your noble and munificent friend the Duchess-dowager of Portland has sent me a twenty pound bank-note for her; so, as I take it, she will soon be the richest poetess, certainly the richest milkwoman, in Great Britain.

It is too late to send my letter to the post, but I hope it will escape untaxed to-morrow. I had a great deal of company yesterday evening, Kentish Lady Hailes, and her four blooming daughters; Lady Bathurst, and her fair train; so we made up quite a little London-looking party. I am going to these last when I have released you, which, if you had not all the goodness you have, you would have been longing for full half an hour ago; but when I begin writing to you, I really do not know when to leave off, because it is so like talking to you; and if you remember, I never was weary of that, but always thought eight o'clock struck sooner in your drawing-room, than anywhere else.

Yours ever,
My dear madam,
H. M.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1784.

Macbeth has murdered sleep, and Pitt has murdered scribbling! What becomes of the damsels with ah's! and oh's! who tell some dear Miss Willis all their woes! And what becomes of me when, after many delays, I find leisure to scribble to my dear friend at Bristol any nonsense, *qui plait à ma plume?* Why, she will generously tell me that she has postage in her pocket, but we have been used to franks, and besides the post is bewitched, and charges nobody knows what for letters; two shillings and ninepence, I think, Mrs. Leveson says she paid for a letter free, Falmouth, but no date of the day. Now he seems to have got his lesson, and remembers it. The duke is gone to Badminton, with sons of all sizes, and Dr. Penny *le fidel Achate*, so that I am left *chargée d'affair;* I am so happy with my two daughters, that I do by no means find out that London is unpleasant in September; indeed, sometimes I rise with the lark, and run down to breakfast at Glanvilla, where I must own that Mrs. Keeble gives me better cream and butter, raspberries, and fruit of all sorts, than I find here. I walk and sit in my garden, get an early dinner, and repair at sunset to the working party (not a bit like a lying-in-room, but with sashes open) in Grosvenor-

square. Yesterday we saw there, and the duchess saw it, just as well as if we had been at Moorfields, the great balloon which had so many thousand spectators, that I assure you they were as little to be imagined as counted. Where all came from that I saw running, walking, crawling towards the spot, was to me incomprehensible. Admiral Barrington is hurt to think that no Englishman has gone up yet either in France or England: and indeed I thought it so suitable to English daring, that when first I heard of Messrs. Charles and Robert, I affirmed they must have had English mothers. Lunardi's nest, when I saw it yesterday looking like a peg-top, seemed, I assure you, higher than the moon "riding towards her highest noon."

All this while I have not thanked you for your charming epistle, my dear friend; whenever you are disposed so to treat me, you have only to direct to Lord F. in Audley-street, and without enclosing, for I cannot mistake your hand. I can easily believe you spent your time very agreeably with Mrs. Montagu at Sandleford, and how glad you must be to see Mrs. Garrick arrive. The cathedral window and Gothic Grove I delighted in, and could hardly eat my dinner for gazing at it by moonlight; they must be charming, but for pity's sake no fairies. I don't believe I ever was young enough to like Mab or Oberon, so much do I differ from you; *ah qui en doute!* Adieu, my dear friend, another odious revolution of the post is, that it rides in coaches, so, as I go out of town to-morrow, I shall not be back time enough to send it on the day it is marked for, and it will keep no more than a roasting pig; whereas I used to write all my letters of a night, after that eight o'clock which parted us, and as to covers, I had them safe in a bag. These were the halcyon days of scribbling; now I am sitting up till past midnight, that this may be ready for to-morrow. Can you help saying, *Ah elle ne vaut pas la peine?* Yes, for it tells, and it proves, that

I am most affectionately
Yours,
F. B.

From Mr. Walpole to Miss H. More.

March 6, 1784.

Mr. Walpole thanks Miss More a thousand times not only for so obligingly complying with his request, but for letting him have the satisfaction of possessing and reading again and again her charming and very genteel poem, the "Bas Bleu." He ought not, in modesty, to commend so much a piece in which he himself is flattered; but truth is more durable than blushing, and he must be just, though he may be vain. The ingenuity with which she has introduced so easily very difficult rhymes, is admirable, and though there is a quantity of learn-

ing, it has all the air of negligence, instead of that of pedantry. As she commands him, he will not disobey; and so far from giving a single copy, he gives her his word that it shall not go out of his hands. He begs his particular compliments to Mrs. Garrick, and is Miss More's most devoted,

Much obliged humble servant,

H. WALPOLE.

From Mrs. Vesey to H. More.

Margate, May, 1784.

My DEAR MADAM,

The first line you cast your eye upon will make an apology for not answering your obliging letter in London useless; but make the prize high enough, and even pot-hooks will talk. It is impossible not to tell you my dream last night. The conversation fell upon Charles the Sixth and the Duc D'Orleans at the fatal bal masqué. I imagined we were sitting together, when you suddenly left me, to whisper a mask habited en sauvage, like the Duc D'Orleans. I inquired who he was; you answered, "It is the sun." Next morning I had the pleasure of opening my eyes upon your delightful packet, a call to banish sleep,—there was never before such a trumpet at Margate. How could I help exclaiming, My dream is out; his excellency has been telling her of the bright regions, the bright geniuses he has illuminated in remote antiquity! She is quite at home at the enchanting banquets. Mr. Vesey, who is much better acquainted with the geniuses, the beaux of Athens, Rome, and London, than myself, is enchanted, and will write to you himself. I suppose it will steal into print under adopted names, and I desire to take my place, as I cannot think of a name of two syllables. I have read your poem but once, for Mr. Vesey took it from me, and read it with such delight as I cannot express. Airing is generally a dull hour, but here it is enlivened by the dashing of the sea, and the prospect of the fatal Goodwin Sands, which have been under the inspection of the Royal Society, and the danger is now found to be suction. This I had from a daughter of Sir Cloudesley Shovel. The fields are pleasant, from the rich cultivation, where wheat and poppy rise together. These two blessings, of sleep and food in conjunction, have been attempted in the remarks of some poet's quill, I wish it had been yours, and I should have had them by heart. Mr. Vesey says, every part of the globe grows wheat; I doubt not but the poppy is her handmaid, though the jade in warmer climates sometimes overoffices her business. I am now writing in a lobby on the staircase, on a card-table; the demon of gaming no doubt will think himself very ill-used, though his handmaid chance has the sole direction of my pen.

I have the pleasure of talking of you every evening with

the Duchess of Portland and Miss Harris; the latter, I hope, will tell you next winter how she skated through the northern climates, almost to every court, and over frozen seas, which, when they were liquid, gave her the episode of a *Shipwreck*; but one need not go to Russia for the artillery of winter; we have had it here, and it is now howling upon my staircase. A lady was resolved to brave all its majestic tricks, and took a lodging upon a dangerous cliff, where, two nights past, the sea went to bed to her. I am very glad Mrs. Garrick and you gave Mrs. Montagu the pleasure of your company; her resources of conversation are as inexhaustible as her friendship: she will certainly go down to distant ages, while Garrick and More will partake the gale.

I would toss this blotted paper out of the window, but it must take its run before the last hour, free from post tax. Adieu, most agreeable friend, look with some compassion upon a worn-out pen, more fit to scratch a letter to a Hottentot than to one so polished and delightful. Let me conclude with what I feel for the place you have given me in your charming poem; though undeserving, I am not unfeeling.

Your most obliged and affectionate,

E. Vesey.

P.S.—I have met with a fragment of Gray's, upon Kingsgate, with a fine poetical picture of the Goodwin Sands, and the uninhabited monastery, but so malevolent against the builder, that I cannot believe it is all his own.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Bristol, July 17, 1784.

Dear Sir,

I have been so much employed since I came hither, in doing the honours of the neighbouring woods and rocks to some friends, and have been so entirely a vagrant ever since I left London, that I have hardly done so grave a thing as to write a letter, nor so idle a one as to write verses, nor so irksome a one as to correct them. I have made the most of this enchanting weather, and, like King Lear, have "abjured all roofs." My reading has been as idle as the rest of my employments, and if I do not soon reform, I shall become a convert to the entreaties of my gay and gallant friend General Oglethorpe, who has long been trying to proselyte me to the old romance; gravely lamenting that the only fault I have is refusing to read the old romances; assuring me that it is the only way to acquire *noble sentiments*; but I do confess that hitherto I have never been able to get through a single page of histories which have no approximation to the manners and passions of this world. I must have *men* and *women*, with whom I can have sentiments, affections, and interests in common: I don't care

how romantic the story, or how exalted the character, provided it be still *probable* adventure, and *possible* perfection.

I have just laboured through Dryden's Fables, chiefly out of complaisance to Mrs. Montagu, Mr. Walpole, and Dr. Burney; but, like a confirmed bigot, all that I read on the other side of the question only serves to confirm me more steadfastly in the old faith. I am ready to allow the beauty of a multitude of passages, the spirit of the expression, and the vigour and variety of the versification, but they have the deadly poetical sin of not interesting me; nor do lines from them occur to my mind every hour, suitable to *every* character and to *every* occurrence, as they do from Shakspeare, the poet of human actions and human passions; and from Pope, that eternal embellisher of common sense, common life, and just thinking; whose every line is a maxim or a portrait. You will say I must be terribly indigent of matter, to tread over again this beaten ground, and you will say right.

I had the satisfaction of hearing that Miss Seward's *Louisa* made you weep; I remember the difficulty I had to make you promise to read it; the same repugnance I have had to combat in a dozen other people; all were as unwilling as if it had been a sermon, or something that was to do them good; but when they *had* read it, all who had any taste for imagery, sentiment, and poetry thanked me for having compelled them to enjoy this pleasure, and I expected *you* would have had the same gratitude. Miss Seward's imagination is bright and glowing; she is rich in expression, and admirable at description; but to counterbalance all these excellences, she has one fault, which is of great magnitude, but which may not perhaps be so great an offence in your eyes as I confess it is in mine: what it is I shall not mention, and in case it does not strike you, I am willing you should call me mean and malignant for suggesting it: a little envy is natural, if not pardonable; when I see Mrs. Pepys, I will tell *her* my objections. I am much obliged to you for exerting your critical acumen on the verses; I shall take your hints, make the alterations you suggest, and leave out the two lines whose incorrect rhymes you quarrel with. Sometimes I am puzzled about rhyming, whether it should be to the eye or the ear, but am never *quite* contented with a rhyme which does not satisfy both.

Since I have given in to this very wicked kind of dissipation, of reading nothing but idle verses, I wish you would tell me something to read. I have run through a few cantos of Ariosto, but the casual delight I received was so often broken in upon by serious resentment and insupportable ennui, that I believe I shall give it up, for though I am often pleased, I am often angry, and still oftener tired: do not betray me, for I know it is *mauvais ton* to have so little enthusiasm on this subject. Apropos of enthusiasm, do you remember a sweet little poem of Warton's, "*The Enthusiast?*" I read it yesterday in one

of my rambles, with such an accompaniment of scenery as made it very delightful to me, and just such as the author may be supposed to have written it in.

You will think it is a wet day by my writing so long a letter, but you are mistaken. I would not, however, venture to send such a one if I did not hope you were settled in the country, where people expect and forgive nonsense with more ease than they do in London. I shall release you, however, after desiring you to present my kind compliments to Mrs. Pepys, and to tell her sweet little boy that I love him very much.

I am your obliged, &c.

H. More.

From Mr. Pepys to Miss H. More.

Mount Ephraim, Aug. 8, 1784.

My dear Friend,

There is often a certain degree of profanation, as well as unfaithfulness, of which the mind is perfectly conscious, and for which it never fails to reproach itself, though no laws and no censure (but its own) can ever reach it; of such a kind of profanation should I have been conscious, had I suffered myself to answer your delightful letter in the midst of wrangling, dissonance, and chicanery, with which I have of late been surrounded, and from which I did not escape till ten o'clock on Saturday night. But now that I am happily placed on this delightful hill,—that I have a fine extensive prospect in all the luxuriant beauty of the country before my eyes, and have made the long-wished-for exchange of town habits and town ideas for country thoughts and country pleasures,—that of expressing to you my gratitude for your friendly remembrance of me occurs to my mind as one of the first in which to indulge myself; not as discharging a debt, but acknowledging a favour. Exclusively of the *general* pleasure which I never fail to receive from your letters, I had, in the last, the peculiar one of being much flattered by your coinciding with me in opinion upon two or three subjects in which I had begun to fear I was somewhat deficient in taste. With respect to the old romance, I cannot speak of it; I never read a syllable in that way, having been initiated from the first in real life and manners, after which I conceive it is impossible to rise or descend (whichever you call it) to the other without absolute disgust. I wish indeed I had read books in that way at a time of life when they might have given me pleasure; as I well remember my dear and admirable friend Lord Lyttleton used to speak of them in the same terms of approbation as your gay and gallant admirer General Oglethorpe; but then, I apprehend, they must be administered in the proper season, for now I am persuaded they would be as nauseous as pap, which, however, I doubt not, in former days, was very delicious; and their effect upon the morals of our countrymen (may I add countrywomen?) was

evidently much better than that of modern romances, by connecting with the passion of love every sentiment of honour, courage, and generosity. The old romances had no doubt a tendency to elevate that passion which it has been the business of modern romance to debase; and, as works of *imagination*, I do not doubt that they are excellent; but though I should be sorry that my little boy should not pass through the medium of Ovid's Metamorphoses, nay, that he should not (in a particular stage of his education) prefer the wild imagination and the false brilliancy of that romantic poet, to the chaste, sober, and correct beauties of Virgil; yet, if *after* he had once *tasted* the charms of truth and simplicity, he should go *back* and give a preference to the former, I should consider it as a kind of apostacy. I most sincerely lament that I did not read Ariosto at a time of life when it might have taken hold of my imagination, which, from the trial I made of it last year at this place, I am persuaded it never will now, not because it is not good enough, but because my mind is not open enough to such impressions; as I experienced most wofully, not long ago, with regard to Sinbad the Sailor, whose exploits in fishing up diamonds with raw beef-steaks were, at one time of my life, the very delight of my heart; but now, alas! those delights are no more!

Apropos of Ariosto, when I say of him, *in general*, that I have lost my capacity of being pleased with him, let me, in justice to myself and him, except that delightful passage where he comes to the spot where Angelica and Medoro had been together. The possibilities with which he endeavours to deceive himself—the starting from the bed as if he had been upon a nest of adders—all that passage is truth, nature, passion, and every thing that is most excellent and wonderful. I would most readily travel from home to Bristol for—but why Bristol? I recollect that you are, at this time of my writing, at Sandleford. What will our good friend Mrs. Montagu say, if you should betray me; she whose mind is equally open to the wildest sallies of imagination, and the closest metaphysical reasoning, what will she say to all my humiliating confession?

So it was *you* at last to whom I am indebted for the delicious tears I shed over the poem. I have been carrying about my thanks ever since I read it, as one carries about a guinea in a piece of paper, quite sure that I owed them to somebody, but not being able to recollect to whom. I am most sincerely obliged to you for recommending this poem to me, and wish that in return I could answer your inquiry after some book to read as much to your satisfaction. I have been running my eye over a book lately, which has afforded *me* very great pleasure, "Les Veillées du Château," by M. Genlis, but I should distrust myself in mentioning it to you, because I suppose a great part of the pleasure I derived from it was owing to the delight which I foresaw my boy would soon have in

reading it, and from finding it so perfectly unexceptionable and entertaining; which, to say the truth, it was full as much to *me* as it ever can be to him. As I had read most of Coxe's Russia, and did not bring hither Cook's Voyages, I have had the curiosity within these few days to look into Harris's Philosophical Arrangements, which, if you have any delight in metaphysical abstraction, is so far a valuable work as it gives you some idea of those speculations for which (among other things) the name of Aristotle is placed so high in the temple of Fame; but Mrs. Montagu, the beginning of last winter, made an observation on metaphysics which I shall never be able to get out of my head, which haunts me through all the predicaments, viz. that metaphysical researches put her in mind of the old riddle, "A roomful, and a houseful, but nobody can catch a handful." Pray tell her she has done me great mischief in my metaphysical speculations by telling me this, for that several times within this week, when I thought that I had just caught hold of *primary matter* by the nape of the neck, the thought of this has made me laugh, and let it slip out of my fingers.

Adieu, my dear madam; and whenever you are disposed to talk on any of *our* topics, be so good as to remember that there is a friend upon Mount Ephraim, whose mind is very much in unison with *yours*.

Yours affectionately,
W. W. PEPYS.

From Miss More to Mr. Pepys.

Bristol, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

There has scarcely one bright September sun darted through my window upon my écritoire, but I have resolved to thank you for your very entertaining letter, which I received one day at dinner at Sandleford, and which furnished a very pleasing dessert to the whole party; for, to show you what *entire* confidence you may place in me, I obeyed your injunction of *not* betraying your treasonable sentiments, by putting your letter into Mrs. Montagu's hand, who forthwith read it aloud; this produced a great deal of pleasantry, and renewed the old critical squabbles again. We had not forces for a regular battle, but many a skirmish did we fight; in these I was sure to be worsted by the disciplined veteran, who, alas! has *arms as well as rules*.

I need not tell you that my visit was an exceedingly pleasant one: we passed our time in the full enjoyment of the best blessings *this* world has to bestow, friendship, tranquillity, and literature. You agree with me, I know, in thinking that what makes our accomplished friend so delightful in society is, that in her company *les jeux et les ris* constantly act as pages and

maids of honour to Apollo and the nine, who always owe half their attractions to their lovely train; and who, though very *respectable* without them, can never be entirely *captivating*. So well were we pleased with the manner in which we lived together, that we have been actually in treaty for repairing to Sandleford to *encore* my visit; but we cannot accommodate our time to each other, so I shall stay till Mrs. M. comes to Bath.

I have lived most gloriously idle all the last months, rambling about the romantic hills and delicious valleys of Somersetshire; it is full of enchanting scenery; the views are rather interesting than magnificent; and the neighbourhood of the friend's house where I was abounds with the most smiling valleys, the most touching little home-views, the prettiest rising and falling grounds, the clearest living streams, and the most lovely hanging woods I ever saw. These gentle scenes, which are *agreste* without being savage, are, I am persuaded, more delightful to *live* among than the blaze and the roar, the awful and astonishing, of the sublime: of this I am convinced by a ride we took through the lofty cliffs of Cheddar, so stupendously romantic that the shade of Ossian, or the ghost of Taliessen himself might range, not undelighted, through them; my imagination was delighted, was confounded, was oppressed, and darted a thousand years back into the days of chivalry and enchantment, at seeing hang over my head vast ledges of rock exactly resembling mouldered castles and ruined abbeys. I had a delightful confusion of broken images in my head, without one distinct idea; but the delight was of so serious a nature that I could scarcely refrain from crying, especially when we sat down upon a fragment of rock, and heard one of Gray's odes finely set, and sung with infinite feeling. I would have given the world to hear my favourite Ode to Melancholy by Beaumont and Fletcher; you know it,—

> "An eye that's fastened to the ground,
> A tongue chained up without a sound;
> Gloomy cells and twilight groves,
> Places which pale Passion loves," &c. &c.

But these pensive pleasures should be repeated at long intervals; they wind up the mind too high, and infuse into the spirit a sentiment compounded of sadness and delight, which, though it may qualify one to write odes, yet indisposes one for a much more indispensable thing, the enjoyment of the intercourse of ordinary society. But you will grow sick of these sombre scenes, though I think you would have performed the pilgrimage itself with enthusiasm.

Present my kind compliments to Mrs. Pepys: I know not where you are, but I suppose on Mount Ephraim.

I am your obliged, &c.

H. More.

From Mr. Pepys to Miss H. More.

1784.

I am rejoiced to find that your imagination has been so finely regaled with beautiful scenery, for I know that with *you* the impression made by these delightful views penetrates much deeper than the eye. I too have been constantly feasted with this most enchanting country, and have daily felt what I hold to be one of the highest pleasures in life, at least one of the most pure and unmixed,—that exhilarating tranquillity which a fine country and fine weather never fails to inspire. There is a consciousness which always attends that species of delight, and which adds much to its effect on the mind, viz. that it cannot be indulged to *excess;* this was certainly meant by Milton when he calls the vernal delight *unblamed;* but I think it may be carried a little further, and not only be considered as *unblamed*, but, by a very easy transition, converted into the most natural and sublimest act of devotion; for how is it possible,

> "When the eye has caught new pleasures,
> While the landscape round it measures
> Russet lawn and fallows gray," &c.

not to exclaim,

> "These are thy glorious works, Parent of good?"

My good friend Lord Lyttleton, who gave this just and natural turn to the mind by that inscription on a seat which commanded all the beauties of nature, used to say, when I expressed to him my feelings upon that subject, that it was only because I had a religious turn of mind that I passed so easily from admiration to devotion, but that the transition was not so *common* as I imagined: whether this be so or not, I will not determine; but if it is not, I think it must be owing to the prevalent influence of some bad passion, which counteracts the natural effect of such scenes upon the mind; but where the mind is not either habitually depraved or under the immediate influence of bad or strong passions, I can hardly conceive that the thoughts should not be directed upwards. The very sensation of one's own happiness in these moments naturally inspires the heart with gratitude, and diffuses over it that delightful unruffled animation which always terminates in glory to God and good-will towards men.

I am not only acquainted with the Ode to Melancholy, but have heard it admirably set to music by Weber, for which, I am told, we are indebted to the taste of Sir Watkin Williams. It is in truth a charming composition, and I remember being surprised at myself for not having seen it before I heard it

performed; but *that* is only one of the many thousand jewels which lie hid under the rubbish of Beaumont and Fletcher, and which I fear will ever lie hid from me, as I shall not have the heart, at this time of day, to wade through so much as I must do to get at them. If you have waded through them, I should esteem it a great favour if you would refer me to any parts which have particularly struck you, as I could rely with so much security upon *your* taste for the selection. I once asked Mrs. Thrale to undertake this office for me; but she told me that she had omitted to mark them at the time, and that she could not think of going over the same road again, as she well remembered that the way was full of *mire*, and the *stepping-stones* at a great distance. Was not this well said?

I am glad to find that you are to have Mrs. Montagu at Bath. If you are with her there, you will have more of her in a week than you can have of her in a month in London, which seldom affords us more of those whose company we love than just what is enough to tantalize one, and make one wish for better opportunities of seeing them.

Mrs. Pepys desires me to remember her to you in the kindest manner.

Much yours,
W. W. Pepys.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Carter.

Bristol, 1784.

How kind and generous is it in you, my dearest Mrs. Carter, to consult my wishes rather than my deserts, and to give me the pleasure of receiving such a delightful letter from you so much sooner than I could reasonably hope for it! I hope the speediness of my reply will not make you repent your indulgence. *Faire des heureux* is one of the highest privileges of our nature; and I assure you that you exercise that prerogative in no low degree whenever you write to me or talk to me.

The abolition of franks is quite a serious affliction to me; not that I shall ever regret paying the postage for my friends' letters, but for fear it should restrain them from writing. It is a tax upon the free currency of affection and sentiment, and goes nearer my heart than the cruel decision against literary property did; for that was only taxing the *manufacture*, but this the raw *material*.

I believe I forgot to mention that I had disposed of part of your bounty to the poor woman. Mrs. Palmer, the bookseller, speaks highly of her honesty and sobriety, but says that her pride is so great that she will let nobody know where she lodges; and it is but seldom that she can prevail upon her to eat, when she calls upon her, though she knows her at the time to be near perishing. I could not but smile at the absurd

notions people entertain of right and wrong; for this preposterous pride Mrs. Palmer seemed to think a noble *fierté*. However, I have made her *condescend* to promise, that if she should have a dangerous sickness, or be confined to her bed, she would vouchsafe to let me know the place of her abode, that she might not die of want; and yet all this pride pretends to a great deal of religion. Poor creatures! not to know that humility is the foundation of virtue; and that pride is as incompatible with piety towards God as it is with the repose of our own hearts.

I have read the first volume only of *Les Veillées du Château*. What a surprising talent that woman has of making every thing that passes through her hands interesting; the barrenest and most unpromising subjects "she turns to favour and prettiness." Yet this is the woman with whom, I am told upon unquestionable authority, I must not cultivate a friendship. Can it be possible, my dear friend, that she who labours with so much ability and success in the great vineyard of education should herself be deficient in the most important qualities which she so skilfully paints and so powerfully recommends? What motives for humiliation, for self-distrust, and circumspection in one's own conduct does such a character suggest to me! I am never so effectually humbled as in contemplating the defects of a shining character. So far from feeling any interior joy that the distance between them and me seems to be lessened, I am deeply alarmed lest those of my own actions which seem the least exceptionable, should either proceed from wrong motives or be a cover for false principles. And I do assure you, my dear Mrs. Carter, with all the truth of sincere friendship, that one of my deepest causes of uneasiness is lest I should deceive others, and especially myself, as to the motives of my own actions. It is so easy to practise a creditable degree of seeming virtue, and so difficult to purify and direct the affections of the heart, that I feel myself in continual danger of appearing better than I am; and I verily believe it is possible to make one's whole life a display of splendid virtues and agreeable qualities, without ever setting one's foot towards the narrow path, or even one's face towards the strait gate.

I hope we shall not lose Miss Hamilton entirely out of London, and I long for the decision of that point; but whatever will be most prudent and proper for her I shall acquiesce in.

Yours, my dear madam,
most faithfully,
H. M.

Sandleford Priory.

MY DEAR MRS. CARTER,

The date will discover to you that I write from the delightful abode of our delightful friend. There is an irregular beauty

and greatness in the new buildings, and in the cathedral aisles which open to the great gothic window, that is exceedingly agreeable to the imagination. It is solemn without being sad, and gothic without being gloomy. Last night, by a bright moonlight, I enjoyed this singular scenery most feelingly; it shone in all its glory; but I was at a loss with what beings to people it: it was too awful for fairies, and not dismal enough for ghosts. There is a great propriety in its belonging to the champion of Shakspeare, for, like him, it is not only beautiful without the rules, but almost in defiance of them. I have been such a stroller, that I have hardly done so serious a thing as to write a letter during the whole bright and pleasant month of September. I spent that month at the house of a friend, in one of the most enchanting vales of Somersetshire. The surrounding scenery was so lovely, so full of innocent wildness, that I do not know any place that ever caught such hold of my imagination. If spring is the poet's season, it must be allowed that autumn is the painter's. Such delicious warmth in the colouring of the woods! Every morning I rode through the most delightful valleys, or crept along the sides of the most beautiful hanging woods, where the blue smoke ascending from the cleanest white cottages in the world had the prettiest effect imaginable: it was a sort of thin gray ether, a kind of poetical smoke, which seemed too pretty to be connected with the useful,—very unlike the gross, substantial, culinary vapour which suggests ideas only of corporeal and common things. But most devoutly did I wish for you, one day that I passed in a narrow and deep valley, under a vast ledge of rocks, so lofty and stupendous as to impress the mind with ideas the most solemn and romantic. They were shaped by nature into forms the most astonishing and fantastic, exactly resembling gothic castles and ruined abbeys, which brought with them a train of broken images, wild and amazing, or awful and affecting, as the scenes succeeded each other. But I was exceedingly touched when, sitting down on a huge fragment of rock, some of the company performed one of Gray's wildest odes, in a style of taste and feeling which made the happiest accompaniment imaginable to the scenery.

You, my dear madam, who enjoy whatever is exquisite in poetical composition, or delightful in natural objects, with all your first enthusiasm, would have greatly enjoyed this spot; and I am sure my enjoyment would have been doubled by having it so participated.

Mrs. Ord called and drank tea with us last night, in her way to Bath. She brings a good account of our common friends who are still in town—"the leavings of Pharsalia." The Veseys are to set out to-day for Margate, the Pepyses for Tunbridge; Miss Hamilton's marriage, Mrs. Garrick tells me, is going on prosperously. May she be as happy as she deserves! which I take to be a warm wish.

I see, or rather feel, that there is no perfect happiness in this world; for, instead of enjoying my favourite gothic arch as completely as I ought to do, I am continually thinking to myself—I wish Mrs. Carter or Mr. Smelt, or one or other of the high order of beings, were enjoying this with me;—that would double my gratification.

Adieu, my dearest Mrs. Carter; there is not a person in the world who loves and honours you with a warmer heart than

Your faithful and obliged H. M.

From H. More to her sister.

Adelphi, 1784.

You ask after Lælius. He is such a favourite with great and learned ladies, that he is generally fastened down by one or other of them; and though he does now and then make some struggles for his liberty, it cannot always be obtained. Whereas Horace liking nonsense-talk better than to be always with the Greeks and Romans, I sometimes get more than my share of him, as was the case at a most complete *bas bleu* the other night at Mrs. Vesey's, where was every thing witty and every thing learned that is to be had; but I generally stick by my old friends; so got into a nook, between Mr. Walpole and Mr. Jenyns, and was contented. I am very humble, you will say. The next night I was in a different scene, a most splendid assembly at the Bishop of St. Asaph's. The Prince of Wales was there. He was reckoned to come excessively early—half-past ten; you will judge what a time it was before we got away, though it was only a *private* party of about two hundred, and I believe the bishop was heartily glad when he got rid of us. For my part, I do not desire to be ever again in such a crowd, whether of the great vulgar or the small!

Saturday I had a most pleasant afternoon with Mrs. Delany and the Duchess of Portland, who now begin to get up their spirits, which have been greatly depressed by the loss of Lady Mansfield. There was a friendship of sixty years' standing between them. On Tuesday we dined with our neighbour Mr. Hoare, with a man-party; a very pleasant lord, and a very merry judge, though that is against the proverb. And on Friday we had a small but very rational party at Mrs. Burrows's.

From the same to the same.

London, 1784.

At length we have been to breathe two or three days' fresh air at Hampton, where I literally dwelt among the lilacs. It was charming weather, only excessively hot. This is something like May, the *old May* of the poets. I should be very glad to be still in the country, but Mrs. G. has business in

town. I was quite worn out last week with visiting,—dined out six days following. It was well Sunday came to my relief, but it is all over now; and now I may very philosophically cry out, with Wolsey—

"Vain pomp and glory of the world! I hate ye!"

He did not, however, renounce it while he could keep it, nor complain of it while he could enjoy it: and I am afraid I am a little in the same way, not absolutely though, for I do refuse far more than I accept.

Lord Bathurst has lent me a very entertaining collection of original letters, from Pope, Bolingbroke, Swift, Queen Mary, &c., and has promised to make me a present of any thing I like out of them. I cannot say these communications have given me a very great idea of Queen Mary's head: her heart, I am persuaded, was a very good one. The defect must have been in her education; but such spelling and such English I never saw; romantic and childish too, as to sentiment. My reverence for her many virtues leads me to hope she was very young when she wrote them.

Mrs. Vesey begged me most earnestly, on Tuesday, to meet a very small and choice party, which was made for Mrs. Delany and the Duchess of Portland. I dined with Mrs. Boscawen, and we went together. I had a great deal of chat with Mr. Burke; and so lively, and so foolish, and so good-humoured was he, and so like the agreeable Mr. Burke I once knew and admired, that I soon forgot his malefactions, and how often I had been in a passion with him for some of his speeches. He talked a great deal of politics with General Oglethorpe. He told him, with great truth, that he looked upon him as a more extraordinary person than any he had read of, for that he had founded the province of Georgia; had absolutely called it into existence, and had lived to see it severed from the empire which created it, and become an independent state. I could have added, And whose wicked eloquence was it that helped to bring about this mighty revolution? and by his looks, I believe, venerable Nestor had the same thought. Yesterday was dear Mrs. Delany's birthday, and I went to pay my congratulations; very hearty they were, and very cordially were they accepted. She had received company all the morning; had a party at dinner, and spent the evening with the king and queen, who insisted that they should have her company on her birthday; how pretty! and yesterday they took care to get her a place where she could enjoy the Handel commemoration without danger or fatigue. Think of this astonishing woman's being able to go through all this at fourscore. She had formed a little project to surprise us here on Saturday; we had a great deal of company, all the blues; and Mrs. Delany, happening to hear of it, intended to appear unexpectedly, which would have

delighted everybody, but something happened to spoil her scheme, and then she told us of it. We have been, for a few days, at Mrs. Bouverie's, at Teston. I never was in such an earthly paradise. The park, the house, the garden, are all delightful; nothing can exceed the goodness of the inhabitants, whose whole lives are spent in acts of beneficence. I hope you have been clever and industrious enough to discover some new little retired delightful spots for our gipsy frolics.*

CHAPTER IV.

DURING Hannah More's residence with her sisters at Bristol, in the summer of this year, 1784, an extraordinary object was presented to the benevolence of the family. Their cook informed them that the person who called daily for the kitchen-stuff, for the maintenance of her pig was, with her husband and several children, absolutely perishing with hunger; and drew such a picture of their distress as excited their liveliest compassion. They lost no time in endeavouring to rescue this wretched family, and soon discovered that the woman was possessed of extraordinary talents, which not even the last stage of famine and misery could repress. She produced several scraps of her poetry, in which were striking indications of genius. It immediately occurred to Miss H. More that this talent might be made the means of exciting a general interest in her behalf, and raising a fund to set her up in some creditable way of earning her subsistence. She accordingly took a great deal of pains in furnishing her with some of the common rules of writing, spelling, and composition; and while the object of her charity was preparing, under her inspection, a small collection of poems, she was employing herself in writing statements of the case to all her friends of rank and fortune, to bespeak subscriptions to this work, setting forth the probability of being enabled, after allowing the woman a certain portion of the sum raised, to apprentice out the children with the remainder. The generous zeal with which Miss H. More's friends seconded her wishes soon produced a sum exceeding 600*l.*, which was placed in the funds under the trusteeship of Mrs. Montagu and herself. During thirteen months her time was chiefly engrossed by her exertions in this woman's cause, in whose service, she has been heard to say, she calculated

* This alludes to those rural rambles which formed their chief amusements during the holydays, when, furnished with their work-bags stored with provisions and books, they passed a few hours in the enjoyment of the open air and the delightful scenery of the Clifton Rocks, King's Weston, &c.

that in transcribing and correcting her poems, and in letters of application, she had written more than a thousand pages.

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

Sandleford, 1784.

MY DEAR MADAM,

How many taxes are to be paid before one friend can write, and another friend receive her letter? Human life is subject to duties and customs of various kinds. In vain have I often said to myself, this day I will write to my dear Miss More; a friend arrives; a visitant drops in; some business occurs; some incident intrudes, and night leaves only the power of renewing the dream, the unsubstantial dream of to-morrow's performance. I have longed to express to you, in some degree, how bitterly I felt my disappointment of the happiness I had in the prospect of your company, and how by an accident I was deceived in my expectation of my lord primate. Just after his grace wrote me word that Sir William Robinson and he should be at Sandleford in three or four days, a hurt he had received in his finger inflamed to such a degree that he was obliged to put it under the care of an eminent surgeon in London, who held him by it a long time. Sir William Robinson, who has the least moral bitterness in his composition of any one I ever knew, had, nevertheless, an overflowing of the gall, which he thought would be soonest removed by an apothecary in town, who is well acquainted with his constitution. These gentlemen of the faculty promised both my friends a much speedier cure than they effected; so my expectations were kept waiting from day to day. They arrived at last safe and sound, but not till Mrs. Garrick was gone, and the time you could have bestowed on me was elapsed.

Now, having told my melancholy tale, let me come to the wondrous story of the milkwoman. Indeed, she is one of nature's miracles. What force of imagination! what harmony of numbers! In pagan times, one could have supposed Apollo had fallen in love with her rosy cheek, snatched her to the top of Mount Parnassus, given her a glass of his best helicon, and ordered the nine Muses to attend her call: but as this heathen fiction will not pass now, let us consider whether Christian faith may not serve better. I imagine her mind has been enlightened and enlarged by the study of the Scriptures. In the prophets, in Job, and in the Psalms, there is a character of thought and style of expression between eloquence and poetry, from which a great mind, disposed to either, may be so elevated and so warmed, as, with little other assistance, to become an orator or poet. The New Testament would purify the heart, and the hope of immortality raise the mind above all earthly cares, and all wishes bounded by mortal existence. Her native fire has not been damped by a load of learning.

Flame is extinguished by throwing on it matter which does not contain any igneous particles. Avaunt! grammarians; stand away! logicians; far, far away, all heathen ethics and mythology, geometry and algebra, and make room for the Bible and Milton when a poet is to be made. The proud philosopher ends far short of what has been revealed to the simple in our religion. Wonder not, therefore, if our humble dame rises above Pindar, or steps beyond Æschylus. I do not mean to affirm that such geniuses as do not want the help of art, instruction, and study are not rare; but the temple of Jerusalem and the holy mount may form them without the portico or the academic groves. I should have felt as much pain as delight from the fine stanzas you sent me, if you had not, at the same time, assured me you had taken care this noble creature should not want the little comforts of life. I shall most joyfully contribute towards procuring them for her.

Orders to be given for building and planting will detain me here till the 29th, then, my dear madam, I will get the room well aired. Whether my house will be in the Circus or Queen's Parade, I do not yet know; but I know that when you come to it I shall think it the best-furnished house anywhere. Montagu begs me to present his most sincere and affectionate respects. Mine attend all your family. If you should be told that Sandleford was on fire one night, answer that the fire was extinguished without damage. I have not room to say more on the subject.

From the same to the same.

Sandleford, 1784.

DEAR MADAM,

By a variety, and to me of most vexatious blunders, Lactilla's poems did not arrive here till last night, and then by a conveyance the most unworthy of a muse—a broad-wheeled stage-wagon. Pegasus I know disdains to go on the turnpike-road, so, though he carries Lactilla rapidly through the regions of imagination, it could not be expected that he would call at the printer's to take up her works. But their being made to wait till a great box of vulgar articles should be ready to set out in the wagon, was an indignity of which they would have been very undeserving, even if they had not been enriched, adorned, and ennobled by your incomparable prefatory letter. It is impossible to tell you how much that letter charmed me. That I should be happy in your partial opinion of me, and proud of the public testimony of your friendship, is not to be wondered at; but I have some merit in being so delighted with what you have said on Shakspeare; for your short paragraph does more justice to his talents than all that we, who have written volumes *about him and about him*, have been able to do. Indeed, my dear madam, it is the essence and

quintessence of all we have written; and whoever would perfectly understand the powers and genius of Shakspeare need only read that passage of your introductory letter. Ideas so just, language so happy, that if I were writing to any one but yourself, I should fill my whole letter with nothing but my admiration of it. But I know you attend with more pleasure to whatever reflects honour on others than yourself, so I will only say, it is great merit in me to be pleased when I feel myself excelled.

I have been, for some days past, in a great deal of anxiety about Mrs. Garrick. I wrote her a letter, in which I told her, that before Montagu's marriage I would make her a visit at Hampton, if she was not otherwise engaged. To this letter I have not had any answer; nor have I heard from you since I wrote to you after my first coming to Sandleford. Surely if you were both well, one of you would have written. I shall direct this to the Adelphi, for I think you would not have been so cruel as to have passed by Newbury without calling upon me.

I live in the most perfect sequestration from all the world. If you pass this way it will be charity to call; and I can give you a well-aired bed, though my house is not yet got into order, but the hammers are not so noisy as when I first came.

I am very solicitous to hear how Mr. Vesey has provided for one who made him an affectionate wife, and is his disconsolate widow.

My letter to Mrs. Garrick was directed to Hampton, which induces me to direct this to London, hoping it may meet a kinder fate.

From the same to the same.

Sandleford, 1784.

DEAR MADAM,

Your letters would make one amends for any thing but the loss of your conversation. So greedy of perfect delight is the human heart, that I regretted the absence of the friend, even while I enjoyed the pleasure of her correspondence. The kind assurance you gave me, that you passed your time agreeably here, encourages me to hope for a longer visit next year. The sweetest reveries are composed of recollection of the agreeable past, and hopes of the happy future; and I thank you most sincerely for the days you have given up, and those I hope you will bestow upon me. Indeed words cannot express the delightful impressions you left behind you. Montagu and I often talk over those happy days with grateful pleasure.

Dr. Beattie and his son did not stay near so long with us as I had hoped; the doctor's physicians having ordered him to take a course of sea-bathing, before his duties as a professor call him to the university at Aberdeen. His wife's unhappy

state of mind, and his own great application to study, have sadly affected his spirits and health; and his son, yet a boy, partly perhaps by sympathy with a sick father, and partly by constitution, is much more serious and grave than one would wish so young a person, or indeed any one, to be; for though I honour the precept which teaches to be wise when merry, I think to be merry when wise is nearly as good doctrine. The doctor's *Edwin is no vulgar boy;* he is an admirable scholar, has uncommon talents, and a most excellent heart. A little folly, whisked up into a light froth of youthful gayety, would be what I should ask of *les jeux et les ris* for him, rather than any further favours of Minerva or the learned Nine could bestow.

I am surprised and charmed with your account of the poetical milkwoman. After having considered her character with admiration, a certain selfish principle (which can never be long suspended) suggested to me that I might obtain great pleasure if I could be the means of promoting her prosperity. I beg of you to inform yourself, as much as you can, of her temper, disposition, and moral character. I speak not this out of an apprehension of merely wasting a few guineas, but lest I should do harm where I intend to confer benefit. It has sometimes happened to me, that, by an endeavour to encourage talents and cherish virtue, by driving from them the terrifying spectre of pale poverty, I have introduced a legion of little demons: vanity, luxury, idleness, and pride have entered the cottage the moment poverty vanished. However, I am sure despair is never a good counsellor, and I desire you to be so good as to tell her, that I entreat her, in any distress, to apply to me, and she may be assured of immediate assistance.

The Primate of Ireland has been at Sundridge ever since he left Sandleford, and I believe, from some other engagements, he cannot be here before the end, or at soonest the middle, of next month; so I wrote yesterday to Mrs. Garrick, to endeavour to prevail on her to take a trip to Sandleford, for her room is now vacant, so is yours; and you are just those persons of whom one never can say, their room is as good as their company. Hampton is but two stages from Sandleford; Bristol, I confess, is more distant, but should you make a visit at Dr. Stonehouse's, I might entertain hopes you would allow me to send my post-chaise to fetch you.

Affectionately yours,
ELIZABETH MONTAGU.

The person alluded to in the preceding letter was equally a stranger to gratitude and prudence; and, inflated by the notice she had attracted, soon began to express, in the coarsest terms, her rage and disappointment, at not having the sum subscribed immediately put into her hands. Neither could she bear, as it seems, to be represented to the public, in Miss

More's preface to her works, as an object of their charity. Not being able to gain her point, she soon broke out into the bitterest invectives, and scrupled at no calumnies however absurd and ferocious. We will produce a specimen. The late Duchess of Devonshire having presented her with "Bell's Edition of the Poets," Miss H. More kept them for her till she should be able to find a few second-hand shelves to place them on. Mrs. Yearsley immediately wrote to her grace, complaining that they were kept back from her, at the same time spreading a report in the neighbourhood that her patroness was purchasing an estate with the sum she had pretended to raise for her benefit. Mrs. Montagu and Miss More resisted with great patience her violent importunities to be put in possession of the principal, as well as interest, of her little fortune; fearing it would be consumed in those vices to which it now began to be apparent that she was addicted. But at length they gave it up into the hands of a respectable lawyer, who made it over to a rich and honourable merchant of Bristol; and he was soon harassed into the relinquishment of the whole concern. Miss More, as may well be imagined, never took the trouble of vindicating herself, nor did she manifest any resentment towards this unfortunate creature, with respect to whom she had no other feeling than Christian sorrow for her depravity.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

Audley-street, 1784.

I am in a little care about you, my dear friend: I cannot be sure that you are not vexed, hurt, and made uneasy by that odious woman; the trouble she had given you of another kind, little prognosticated what she would give you now. I really think this passes common depravity!

You know perhaps that the bonne Vesey, for whose future short days one cannot but be much interested, will have about 800*l.* or 900*l.* a year, and Mrs. Handcock 400*l.*

Last night there was a *bal royal* at the queen's house, in one room for children, which was begun by the Princess Mary and *my* Princess Elizabeth; in the saloon, for grown gentlemen and ladies, viz. three princesses, four princes, and *l'élite de la noblesse* of both sexes. His majesty minded only the little ones, whom he ranged and matched, and was quite delighted with their performance, requiring the queen to come and see how well they danced. Her majesty sat on a sofa between the Duchess of Beaufort and Marlborough. The king took a world of care of his little people; charged them not to drink any thing cold, and showed them where they might always find tea, &c. &c. They supped very *properly*, and departed about one: the king, still guarding them, told the mothers to call for their cloaks, and to wrap them up well before they went

down. The other ball and fine supper continued till the sun had been up some time. The Prince of Wales was there, *et en prince, et bon fils.*

And do you suppose, my dear madam, that your poor ignorant friend will attack such a body of science as you send me in Lord Monboddo? far be it from me to be so presumptuous. I have read the preface, which I admire exceedingly, and now I fulfil the prophecy therein contained, viz. that the mere title will frighten many from opening the book. I am of this number, except that I have peeped a little (with a curiosity perfectly female) at dreams, phantasia, and second sight. Methinks our learned friend, *penetré de son système*, must be very willing, and even glad, to die; and as he is threescore years and ten, it pleases me to think so.

Sad weather for your peripatetic philosophers. I believe I do not spell the name of the sect right; *n'importe.*

Yours, with the sincerest affection,

F. B.

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

Sandleford, 1784.

DEAR MADAM,

Mr. Parsons, of Bath, having without orders sent my gothic stone ornaments to London, I have not any occasion to send a carriage to Bath for them. I imagine my house in Portman-square will be as much offended at the arrival of gothic ornaments, as a court beau would be if a hatter sent him a quaker's broad-brimmed beaver. They were designed to adorn the west front of Sandleford, of gothic structure, and to signify to all who approached it that ancient simplicity and hospitality resided there, and a homely and sincere reception awaited them, if they would do the mistress of the mansion the favour to walk in. These pinnacles on the battlements invite to roast-beef and plum-pudding, but could never allure to a *thé.*

I am truly grieved for Mrs. Garrick's loss of her little darling: greater sorrow attends the loss of our hopes, perhaps, than deprivation of our most valuable possession, and never does hope clothe itself in such a perfect form of beauty as in an infant. We dress it out with every excellence, and fashion it to the utmost degree of perfection. I wrote to solicit her to come to Sandleford, where sympathy would share and console her sorrow. For when I would reason with her on the subject, she could not say *she speaks to one who never had lost a child.* I have this morning received a letter from her, in which she tells me she is engaged at present, but gives me hopes that between this time and autumn she will give me the pleasure of seeing her. It would add much to my happiness, and her consolation, if you would meet her. I feel great wrath and indignation at your Missy; great is the injury she

has done at Mongewell and Sandleford; so great, that no punishment could be adequate to it but what she incurred by losing an opportunity of passing some days with you. She has deprived herself of what we regret, though perhaps her loss does not bear any proportion to ours, for there are some ears which the lutes of Apollo would not charm more than the bagpipes of a pedler.

I rejoice with you that we are soon to be free from any connection with the milkwoman. I have the same opinion about favours to the ungrateful-minded as the common people have in regard to witches, that bestowing a gift on such wretches gives them power over one; but for all that, I shall never be discouraged from giving to the distressed person of talents while I have any thing to give: but I can only assist the woman, you can help the poet; your patronage is therefore worth infinitely more than my alms, and I grieve that you have given her so much precious thought and precious time. I should always, from even a selfish principle, wish rather to be the dupe of another's hypocrisy than my own suspicion. The dupes of suspicion are cheated of the best things in human society, confidence and benevolence. I know these very persons think themselves wondrous wise, but they cannot be merry and wise if their wisdom is always apprehensive of deceit and guile.

Mrs. Yearsley's conceit that you can envy her talents gives me comfort; for as it convinces me she is mad, I build upon it a hope that she is not guilty in the all-seeing Eye.

Our dear Vesey has been very ill, owing, she tells me, to eating unripe fruit; but, thank God, she is getting well again. You make her very happy when you favour her with a letter, and, poor thing, she is in a very dejected state, so it is an act of charity to write to her. She is charmed with your description of your cottage, and wishes much to be mistress of one, and I will endeavour next summer to search one out in this neighbourhood: she would be amused with fitting it up: in the possession of it, when finished, I am afraid she would be disappointed; a cottage affords a sweet retreat to the contented mind, or a charming indulgence *to the scholar's melancholy, which is fantastical*, but affords little diversion to real sorrow arising from departed friends, and substantial evils arising from the course of human things.

My nephew and his amiable wife left me yesterday morning, to fulfil an engagement they had made with the York family, to spend some weeks at Lymington: the loss of two such lively, good-humoured young persons makes my house appear very dull; there is now no noise of mirth,

Save the cricket on the hearth.

You hardly inquire after what has been done at this place

since you saw it. I seem to have copied the mode of modern parents—I have embellished the external, and neglected the furnishing of the internal; the pleasure-grounds are much improved since you were here. The view to new beauties is opened, and some ugly old buildings are taken away; but the circumstance of the ill-built chimneys made it impossible to get the house in good habitable order this summer. I beg that you would not make any apologies for having interested me for *l'ingrate;* it is impossible a heart like yours should form to itself the idea of such a creature. *Goodness thinks no ill where no ill seems.*

I beg you to present my compliments to all your family; assure them I have not forgotten the agreeable day I passed with them.

I am impatient to hear that you think of coming to town. If any old maiden at Bristol keeps parrots or macaws, I should be very glad of their cast-off clothes, or any gay feathers, to adorn the feather-work which is going on here.

I am, dear madam,
with most affectionate esteem,
Yours,
E. MONTAGU.

Miss H. More again paid her customary visit to Mrs. Garrick, at the latter end of this year, 1784, the first few weeks of which she passed, as usual, at Hampton, in such seclusion as to furnish few incidents to enliven her correspondence.

Hampton, December, 1784.

Poor dear Johnson! he is past all hope. The dropsy has brought him to the point of death; his legs are scarified: but nothing will do. I have, however, the comfort to hear that his dread of dying is in a great measure subdued; and now he says "the bitterness of death is past." He sent the other day for Sir Joshua; and after much serious conversation told him he had three favours to beg of him, and he hoped he would not refuse a dying friend, be they what they would. Sir Joshua promised. The first was that he would never paint on a Sunday; the second that he would forgive him thirty pounds that he had lent him, as he wanted to leave them to a distressed family; the third was that he would read the Bible whenever he had an opportunity, and that he would never omit it on a Sunday. There was no difficulty but upon the *first* point; but at length Sir Joshua promised to gratify him in all. How delighted should I be to hear the dying discourse of this great and good man, especially now that faith has subdued his fears I wish I could see him.

As the very interesting particulars contained in the following letter, found among Miss H. More's papers, may not be

generally known, we shall perhaps be excused for interrupting the series of her letters by its insertion.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I ought to apologize for delaying so long to gratify your wishes and fulfil my promise, by committing to paper a conversation which I had with the late Rev. Mr. Storry, of Colchester, respecting Dr. Johnson. I will now, however, proceed at once to record, to the best of my recollection, the substance of our discourse.

We were riding together near Colchester, when I asked Mr. Storry whether he had ever heard that Dr. Johnson expressed great dissatisfaction with himself on the approach of death, and that in reply to friends who, in order to comfort him, spoke of his writings in defence of virtue and religion, he had said, "Admitting all you urge to be true, how can I tell when I have done enough?"

Mr. S. assured me that what I had just mentioned was perfectly correct; and then added the following interesting particulars.

Dr. Johnson, said he, did feel as you describe, and was not to be comforted by the ordinary topics of consolation which were addressed to him. In consequence he desired to see a clergyman, and particularly described the views and character of the person whom he wished to consult. After some consideration a Mr. Winstanley was named, and the Dr. requested Sir John Hawkins to write a note in his name, requesting Mr. W.'s attendance as a minister.

Mr. W., who was in a very weak state of health, was quite overpowered on receiving the note, and felt appalled by the very thought of encountering the talents and learning of Dr. Johnson. In his embarrassment he went to his friend Colonel Pownall, and told him what had happened, asking, at the same time, for his advice how to act. The colonel, who was a pious man, urged him immediately to follow what appeared to be a remarkable leading of Providence, and for the time argued his friend out of his nervous apprehension: but after he had left Colonel Pownall, Mr. W.'s fears returned in so great a degree as to prevail upon him to abandon the thought of a personal interview with the Dr. He determined in consequence to write him a letter: that letter I think Mr. Storry said he had seen,—at least a copy of it, and part of it he repeated to me as follows:—

Sir,—I beg to acknowledge the honour of your note, and am very sorry that the state of my health prevents my compliance with your request: but my nerves are so shattered that I feel as if I should be quite confounded by your presence, and instead of promoting, should only injure the cause in which you desire my aid. Permit me, therefore, to write what I should wish to say were I present. I can easily conceive what would

be the subjects of your inquiry. I can conceive that the views of yourself have changed with your condition, and that on the near approach of death, what you once considered mere peccadilloes have risen into mountains of guilt, while your best actions have dwindled into nothing. On whichever side you look you see only positive transgressions or defective obedience; and hence, in self-despair, are eagerly inquiring, "What shall I do to be saved?" I say to you, in the language of the Baptist, "Behold the Lamb of God!" &c. &c.

When Sir John Hawkins came to this part of Mr. W.'s letter, the Dr. interrupted him, anxiously asking, "*Does he say so?* Read it again, Sir John!" Sir John complied: upon which the Dr. said, "I must see that man: write again to him." A second note was accordingly sent: but even this repeated solicitation could not prevail over Mr. Winstanley's fears. He was led, however, by it to write again to the doctor, renewing and enlarging upon the subject of his first letter; and these communications, together with the conversation of the late Mr. Latrobe, who was a particular friend of Dr. Johnson, appear to have been blessed by God in bringing this great man to the renunciation of self, and a simple reliance on Jesus as his Saviour, thus also communicating to him that peace which he had found the world could not give, and which, when the world was fading from his view, was to fill the void, and dissipate the gloom, even of the valley of the shadow of death.

I cannot conclude without remarking what honour God has hereby put upon the doctrine of faith in a crucified Saviour. The man whose intellectual powers had awed all around him was in his turn made to tremble, when the period arrived at which all knowledge is useless, and vanishes away, except the knowledge of the true God, and of Jesus Christ, whom he has sent. Effectually to attain this knowledge, this giant in literature must become a little child. The man looked up to as a prodigy of wisdom must become a fool that he might be wise.

What a comment is this upon that word, "The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be laid low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Hampton, January 7, 1785.

I hope you have got the better of the poetical indigestion you must have experienced at Thames Ditton,* from my having crammed you with bad verses. Unluckily for you and my other gentle readers, within an hour after we parted, I began to exhibit an exact imitation of Mrs. Garrick's cold, which I

* At the Hon. Mrs. Boyle Walsingham's.

copied so successfully in all its parts, that I might have passed for the original, if she had not coughed and croaked precisely in the same hoarse note before me. Now this having confined me a close prisoner to my room ever since, there has been of course

> Room for writing verses e'en to madness,
> Till the pen split with copying.

Now if I were able to *walk*, you may believe I should never write a line while there was a gleam of sun or a blade of grass to cheer my heart or delight my eyes. But as I cannot walk, I must write, and you must read; the consequence is not pleasant, but it is logical: and so, if I act reasonably, I care not if you be punished barbarously. Yet I think I have spent my time as harmlessly as any of you. While you are talking crabbed politics, I am reducing perverse syllables to obedience. Some of your wits have spent their time worse. I had rather be Cinna the poet* than Cinna the conspirator; and if I *must be torn*, I had rather it were for my bad verses than for my malefactions.

But to come to business, which I meant to have done long ago. By-the-by, I do not think you will find time to read this idle stuff till summer, so I would have you desire Mrs. Pepys to pack it up, unread, among the things that are to go to Tunbridge, and there I suppose you are now and then furiously at leisure, as I am at this moment, to your misfortune. Oh! how you fret, and wish it were the rheumatism in my hand, or a defluxion in my eyes, which confined me! But I have done wandering from the matter in hand—and now for the verses. What, verses again!

> "She stops my chariot and she boards my barge."

Well, but you must correct me now, for your own credit, or I will serve you as the milkwoman did me, and declare that all the bad lines are yours.

Do you still persist in the opinion that my name must "stand Rubric on the Post," and that Bas Bleu should be also printed?

I have been brushing the dust off these blue-stockings a little, and have added a few stitches to them. Pray look at my work; perhaps you will say I had better have let it alone. I always say too much. If I had fallen into the hands of Procrustes, I should never have been *stretched* on his bed; but for *curtailment*—Oh! dear, what continual amputation! There would always have been too much of me, and I should have grown out again under his chopping-knife. I could not resist the temptation of bringing my great favourite Joseph of

* Vide Shakspeare's Julius Cæsar.

Winton, and Thomas of Oxenford, into the amiable society at Mr. Vesey's. Still less could I resist making the *eloge* of wit suppressed from reverence to virtue; a merit so great and so obvious that I am surprised not to have seen it mentioned by any writer that I recollect. Do not spare me—the only merit I have is the delight I take in being corrected; and the next praise to *being* good is the desire of *becoming* so.

Kind compliments to Mrs. Pepys. Mrs. G. sends hers.

Pray return this by post to Hampton as soon as you have made it better.

Yours faithfully,

H. More.

From Mr. Pepys to Miss H. More.

Wimpole-street, 1785.

My dear Madam,

I am particularly glad of this opportunity of telling you how much everybody is pleased with your prefatory letter to Mrs. Montagu, and how much I envy you the part you have taken with regard to the milkwoman; which *you*, at least, will remember with more pleasure than the finest verses or the best written scene you ever composed. Her account of the state of her own mind is the part of her poems which pleases me best, and is extremely curious. The consciousness of extraordinary powers, unable to exert themselves (as she seems to conceive) from the insuperable barrier of ignorance, with which her mind is surrounded, and which it is perpetually struggling to surmount, is a new and very interesting representation. Something like this I have frequently observed in a child, who has been conscious of more mind than might be expected from its years, and who has seemed to feel that it was only withheld by the imbecility of its age from saying or doing something above the reach of a child's capacity. When this consciousness is observed at such a time of life as to admit of improvement, it is always a very promising symptom; but when it appears, as I have seen it, in the decline of life, and is accompanied by the remorse of having mispent the season of improvement, it affords a most melancholy subject of contemplation. I remember a friend of mine, of extraordinary natural powers, the cultivation of which had been totally neglected, listening to the discourse of a man of highly-cultivated understanding, and saying, with a sigh and a smile, "You and I, methinks, united, would make a perfect man; you understand every thing but a horse, and I, alas! nothing else."

When do you go to Cowslip Green? and what book shall I send you towards fitting up your library? To send you a skimming-dish, or a fish-kettle, towards setting-up *housekeeping*, would be making too little distinction between you and the next good housewife in the parish; but if you would be so good as

to tell me any pleasant companion, who is not already of your party, I should have a particular pleasure in sending him, post-haste, after you, and should be very much flattered with the idea that some long evening he might recall me to your memory.

With much regard,
I am yours,
W. W. PEPYS.*

Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Bristol, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

Most sincere are my congratulations on the health and safety of your very amiable lady. The interval must have been painful and anxious, but I thank God that the termination has been so happy. I am always glad when a numerous family happens (though, by-the-by, I am persuaded that nothing *happens*) to be sent into a quarter where I am sure they will be well educated. Where this is the case, I have always remarked, in my small observation of human life, that large families were more virtuous, more happy, and even, as to the things of this world, more prosperous, than those in which there is a singular solitary cub to plague his parents, despise his tutors, and torment his dependants. Such a little opulent important animal I have seldom known escape the miseries of an education which is poisoned in the very springs.

I have the mortification to find that my cottage will not be ready for me this summer. I spent the day there on Monday, and the wizard of the mountain brewed up a glorious storm for me. To the most magnificent thunder was added the literal completion of that fine description, "If he do but touch the mountains they shall smoke." This smoke was the consequence of the most violent rains falling on the parched and burning hills, and furnished a more sublime and poetic delight than the brightest day could have bestowed. But *one* day of such enjoyment is enough. All sublimities should be short; the mind cannot be transported long, and it is glad to recover its natural and ordinary train; a passive sort of content is the best state.

I shall be greatly obliged to you for the book you are so good as to propose to me. I am fitting up a tiny boudoir at Cowslip Green, which I intend shall contain no literature but the offerings of kindness; by this means my imagination will convert my little closet into a temple of friendship; and when the weather is bad, or my spirits low, what a cordial it will be to fancy that I am loved and esteemed by so many amiable and

* This letter appears to have been written in ignorance of the bad conduct of Mrs. Yearsley.

worthy people as have there contributed to my instruction and delight! I am mightily at a loss to know what book *you* shall give me: I have been thinking these two hours to no purpose. What think you of a cookery book? No, that won't do either, for that will introduce sauces, and luxury, and all manner of cunningly-devised dishes and extravagant inventions, into a little cottage devoted to simplicity, and from which aspiring thoughts and luxurious desires are to be entirely excluded. I should beg a wooden spoon and a maple dish, but that it is pleasanter to one's friends to be remembered in one's more intellectual hours. What say you to a book I have seen advertised, called *The Way to be rich and respectable?* Such a work, I think, might help to counteract the evil effects of some of its poetical neighbours, which suggest vain fancies and high imaginations. But pray take notice, it must not be a *fine new* book out of a shop; that would destroy the charm, which lies in this, that the book must be transplanted from the library of the friend.

I happen to have so much acquaintance at the Wells this summer, that I have not yet found a single day of that leisure I sigh for. Some very agreeable foreigners have been of our party, the Russian Prince Galitzin, and the most amiable Frenchman I ever knew, his *compagnon de voyage*.

We have a pleasant prospect in view, but whether it will take place the uncertainty of human things leaves it not in my power to say; Mrs. Walsingham, Mrs. Garrick, and I meditate a journey to the Lakes of Cumberland. To me, at least, whose eyes have not been feasted with the scenery of Switzerland, it will be a very new and interesting affair.

When do you take your flight to Mount Ephraim? Hitherto you have not lost much, for the country was never less delightful; but, since the rain, it begins to assume a new character of life and cheerfulness.

Pray remember me kindly to Mrs. Pepys, and desire the sweet little boy not to forget me.

I am your much obliged, &c.

H. MORE.

I am come to the postscript, without having found courage to tell you what I am sure you will hear with pain, at least it gives *me* infinite pain to write it—I mean the most open and notorious ingratitude of our milkwoman. There is hardly a species of slander the poor unhappy creature does not propagate against me, in the most public manner, because I have called her a *milkwoman*, and because I have placed the money in the funds, instead of letting her spend it. I confess my weakness—it goes to my heart, not for my own sake, but for the sake of our common nature; so much for my *inward* feelings: as to my *active* resentment, I am trying to get a place for her husband, and am endeavouring to make up the sum I have raised for her to five hundred pounds. Do not let this

harden *your* heart or mine against any future object. *Fate bene per voi*, is a beautiful maxim.

One of her charges is that I design to defraud her children of the money after her death; and this to my face, the second time she saw me after I came hither. Poor human nature! I could weep over thee! Believe me, nor call me Methodist,—nothing but the sanctifying influences of religion can subdue and keep in tolerable order that pride which is the concomitant of great talents with a bad education.

I have this moment a letter from Madame de Genlis, to say she cannot come to Bristol.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. E. Carter.

Bristol, 1785.

You will judge of the satisfaction and comfort I have in receiving your letters, my dear Mrs. Carter, from the earliness of my answers. Yet I must confess that would sometimes be a very unfair way of estimating affection, as a thousand cross things often prevent the accomplishment of the kindest intentions of that sort; and by a perverseness of circumstances, the dearest friend is sometimes neglected, while the most frivolous acquaintance engages one's time and attention.

I am rejoiced to find, by a letter I have just received from Mrs. Montagu, that our dear Mrs. Vesey will have a competency, though nothing like the affluence to which she has been accustomed, and to which she has so good a right.

Indeed, my dear friend, I can judge by my own of the grief and surprise you must have felt at the death of the Duchess of Portland. She was of the noble and munificent style of the old nobility; she is deservedly regretted, from the palace to the cottage; for the poor deeply lament her, and *majesty* has shed tears for her. Dear Mrs. Delany, I hear, sustains this heavy blow with the resignation which might be expected from the piety of her character; but she also feels it with a sensibility which may be calculated from the tenderness of her heart. You will be glad to learn that she is now with Mrs. Boscawen, at her villa, receiving such consolations as real friendship, a feeling heart, and a very solid piety can administer. I fear we must hardly expect to see her again.* Were you not a little surprised to hear that the duchess had left her nothing but her picture? I am told she is quite satisfied, as it furnishes the strongest proof that her attachment was a disinterested one.

I have been a good deal hurried and taken up lately, from having had a great deal of acquaintance at the Wells; and as water-drinkers have nothing to do themselves, they are very apt to invade the time of those who have. But I reward my-

* Mrs. Delany lived till 1788.

self for these losses, by frequently enjoying the solid and instructive society of Lady Juliana Penn, whom I am so happy as to have within a little walk, and who is so good as to bestow her time upon me sometimes. Miss Penn is a charming girl, full of sense and information, without being so smothered with accomplishments as most of the young misses are, and which they impose upon you as a substitute for knowledge. They are full of care on account of Lady Charlotte Finch and Mrs. Fielding, whose healths are in no good state.

I am on the point of embarking on an expedition, which I figure to myself will be a marvellously pleasant one. I am going, with Mrs. Walsingham and Mrs. Garrick, to see the lakes in Cumberland, &c.* I promise a great banquet to my imagination, in the enjoyment of that bold and romantic scenery, so far surpassing any thing I have seen, though this country is not a tame one.

It seems Mrs. Montagu has given you a little sketch of our milkwoman's history; if she had not, I believe I should have spared you the vexation of knowing that your generous exertions and kind liberality have met with so cruel a return. I grieve most for poor fallen human nature; for, as to my own particular part, I am persuaded Providence intends me good by it. Had she turned out well, I should have had my *reward*; as it is, I have my *trial*. Perhaps I was too vain of my success; and, in counting over the money (almost 500*l.*), might be elated, and think—"Is not this great Babylon that *I* have built?"

Prosperity is a great trial, and she could not stand it. I was afraid it would turn her *head*, but I did not expect it would harden her *heart*. I contrive to take the same care of her pecuniary interests, and am bringing out a second edition of her poems. My conscience tells me I ought not to give up my trust for these poor children, on account of their mother's wickedness. You know Mrs. Montagu and I are joint trustees for the money.

I am grieved to take up your precious time with this mortifying story. It will not steel *your* heart, nor, I trust, *mine*, against the next distress which may present itself to us; but there are many on whom I fear it may have that effect.

My sisters desire their best respects. Pray take care of your health; and believe me, my dearest Mrs. Carter,

Your ever affectionate and faithful

H. More.

P.S.—I send you enclosed a little copy of verses by Mrs. Delany, written in her eighty-fourth year.

* This scheme was never carried into execution.

VERSES WRITTEN BY MRS. DELANY, IN 1784,

WHEN SHE WAS EIGHTY-FOUR YEARS OF AGE.

The time is come I can no more
The vegetable world explore;
No more with rapture cull each flower,
That paints the mead, and twines the bower;
No more with admiration see
Its perfect form and symmetry;
No more attempt with hope elate,
Its lovely lines to imitate.
Farewell to all those active powers
That bless'd my solitary hours.
Alas! farewell! but shall I mourn,
As one who is of hope forlorn?
Come, Holy Spirit! on thy wing
Thy sacred consolation bring;
Teach me to contemplate thy grace,
That hath so long sustained my race;
That various blessings still bestows,
And pours in balm to all my woes.
Teach me submissive to resign,
When summoned by thy will divine.

H. More to her sister.

Hampton, 1785.

Mrs. Garrick is gone to town again for one night, to go to mass, but I desired to stay behind. Mr. Pepys wrote me a very kind letter on the death of Johnson, thinking I should be impatient to hear something relating to his last hours. Dr. Brocklesby, his physician, was with him; he said to him a little before he died, Doctor, you are a worthy man, and my friend, but I am afraid you are not a Christian! What can I do better for you than offer up in your presence a prayer to the great God, that you may become a Christian in my sense of the word. Instantly he fell on his knees, and put up a fervent prayer; when he got up he caught hold of his hand with great earnestness, and cried, Doctor, you do not say Amen. The doctor looked foolishly, but, after a pause, cried, Amen! Johnson said, My dear doctor, believe a dying man, there is no salvation but in the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. Go home, write down my prayer, and every word I have said, and bring it me to-morrow. Brocklesby did so.

A friend desired he would make his will, and as Hume in his last moments had made an impious declaration of his opinions, he thought it would tend to counteract the poison, if Johnson would make a public confession of his faith in his will. He said he would; seized the pen with great earnestness, and asked what was the usual form of beginning a will. His friend told him. After the usual forms he wrote, "I offer up my soul to the great and merciful God; I offer it full of pollution, but

in full assurance that it will be cleansed in the blood of my Redeemer." And for some time he wrote on with the same vigour and spirit as if he had been in perfect health. When he expressed some of his former dread of dying, Sir John said, If you, doctor, have these fears, what is to become of me and others? Oh! sir, said he, I have *written* piously, it is true; but I have *lived* too much like other men. It was a consolation to him, however, in his last hours, that he had never written in derogation of religion or virtue. He talked of his death and funeral at times with great composure. On the Monday morning he fell into a sound sleep, and continued in that state for twelve hours, and then died without a groan.

No action of his life became him like the leaving it. His death makes a kind of era in literature; piety and goodness will not easily find a more able defender, and it is delightful to see him set, as it were, his dying seal to the professions of his life, and to the truth of Christianity.

I now recollect, with melancholy pleasure, two little anecdotes of this departed genius, indicating a zeal for religion which one cannot but admire, however characteristically rough. When the Abbé Raynal was introduced to him, upon the abbé's advancing to take his hand, Doctor J. drew back, and put his hands behind him, and afterward replied to the expostulation of a friend, Sir, I will not shake hands with an infidel! At another time, I remember asking him if he did not think the Dean of Derry a very agreeable man, to which he made no answer; and on my repeating my question, Child, said he, I will not speak any thing in favour of a Sabbath-breaker, to please you nor any one else.

From the same to the same.

London, 1785.

On Friday I was invited to a very agreeable party at Mrs. Vesey's, to hear Mr. Sheridan* read. He gave us the beautiful, but hackneyed, Churchyard Elegy, Jessy, Dryden's Ode, the Morning Hymn, and every thing that everybody could say by heart. He was sensible, but pedantic, as usual. He abused all the English poets, because none of them *had written to the heart.* I was sitting between Soame Jenyns and the Bishop of Chester, both poets, and I was very angry with them that they did not defend the cause of the injured fraternity. They, on the contrary, accused me of pusillanimity. I told them, like Beatrice, "I would I were a man;" for, not being one, I did not care to say much in so large and learned an assembly. However, lest Sheridan should think himself victorious if no one contradicted him, I did venture to say a little, referring him to the dramatic poets Shakspeare, Otway, and Southerne, the tragic drama being

* Father of Richard B. Sheridan.

here, as in almost all countries, the natural field of the pathetic poets.

The French ambassador, yesterday, at court, just at the drawing-room door, fell into an apoplectic fit. I wonder if it struck anybody present in any other view than that it would spoil his assembly last night (SUNDAY), the day on which he regularly holds a faro-bank! One would think they could not have had a more solemn and public summons to recollection. But the profligacy, folly, and madness of this town is beyond the conception of those who *do not* see it, and the patience of those who *do*.

On Monday we had a gala dinner at Mrs. Walsingham's,—the Montagues, the lord primate, Lord Walsingham, the Bishop of Salisbury, Lælius, and others of that order; but it was too grand to be comfortable, and too numerous to be instructive.

From the same to the same.

London, 1785.

I believe I mentioned that a foreign ambassador, Count Adhemar, had a stroke of apoplexy, and that he was to have had a great assembly on the night of the day on which it happened; it is shocking to relate the sequel. It was on a Sunday. The company went—some hundreds. The man lay deprived of sense and motion; his bed-chamber joins the great drawing-room, where was a faro-bank held close to his bed's head. Somebody said they thought they made too much noise. Oh no! another answered, it will do him good; the worst thing he can do is to sleep. A third said, I did not think Adhemar had been a fellow of such rare spirit; palsy and faro together is spirited indeed, this is keeping it up! I was telling this to Mr. Walpole the other day, and lamenting it as a national stigma, and one of the worst signs of the times I had met with. In return he told me of a French gentleman at Paris, who, being in the article of death, had just signed his will, when the lawyer who drew it up was invited by the wife to stay supper. The table was laid in the dying man's apartment; the lawyer took a glass of wine, and addressing himself to the lady, drank *à la santé de notre aimable agonisant!* I told Mr. Walpole he invented the story to outdo me; but he protested it was literally true.

I am charmed with Professor White's Bampton lectures, full of genius, learning, sterling sense, a manly style, and a good temper. The subject is a parallel between the life, character, and doctrine of Mahomet and those of Christ; a subject to which he was naturally led by his studies as Arabic professor. Those writers who have depreciated the character of the impostor have not served the cause of Christianity. For as they lower his claims to understanding, they raise his pretensions to inspiration.

You know I have often told you that Sunday is not only my day of rest, but of enjoyment. I go twice to the churches where I expect the best preaching; frequently to St. Clement's, to hear my excellent friend Burrows; by-the-way, it gives me peculiar pleasure to think that I there partook of the holy sacrament with Johnson the last time he ever received it in public.

It is very considerate in Mrs. Garrick to decline asking company on Sunday on my account; so that I enjoy the whole day to myself. I swallow no small portion of theology of different descriptions, as I always read when visiting such books as I do not possess at home. After my more select reading, I have attacked South, Atterbury, and Warburton. In these great geniuses and original thinkers, I see many passages of Scripture presented in a striking and strong light. I think it right to mix their learned labours with the devout effusions of more spiritual writers, Baxter, Doddridge, Hall, Hopkins, Jeremy Taylor (the Shakspeare of divinity), and the profound Barrow, in turn. I devour much, but, I fear, digest little. In the evening I read a sermon and prayers to the family, which Mrs. G. much likes.

The Middletons inquired after you. I saw them at the bishop's; I did but just see Sir Charles. He stepped in to us once or twice in the course of the evening from the House of Commons, which is close by, and so did two or three other members, to relieve themselves a little from the Westminster petition; odious and tiresome subject, they say!

From the same to the same.

London, Monday, 1785.

Talking of politics the other night, Soame Jenyns said it sounded mighty pretty in an essay to talk of the governor of a free people, but when put into English, it only signified the governor of a people who would not be governed, which was the definition of the King of England. Mr. Walpole has been confined some time with a cruel fit of the gout. Mrs. Vesey, going to visit him in his great chair, fell down stairs, and sprained her leg. I dined with her two days since, in a snug way, with only Mrs. Carter. *She*, poor lady, is lame with the rheumatism. Mrs. Montagu has kept her room these three weeks; so that the Bas Bleu *is very much out at heel*. I went and sat the evening with Mrs. Montagu, *tête-à-tête*.

As the oldest acquaintances, however humble in station, are always considered by me as having the first right to my services, I offered myself to our two friends the first day of my coming. I went next to the Bishop of Chester's, and we were vastly glad to see each other.

From the same to the same.

Thursday morning.

Lord Bathurst has given me for your book two original letters of Voltaire's in English; one written to him when he was chancellor, and the other to his father above fifty years ago, to thank him for the civilities he received at his house when in England. My lord is very obliging, and has taken an infinite deal of pains to rummage out these letters from among his vast mass of papers. I have been there twice this week. Our blue stocking is tolerably well mended again. We have had a pleasant *Vesey* or two lately. Mrs. Carter, Mr. Walpole, and I make our own parties, and ask or exclude just whom we like. Our last was a little too large, and had too many great ladies; and we have agreed to keep the next a secret; but poor dear Vesey is so sweet-tempered and benevolent that, though she vows she will not mention it to anybody, she cannot help asking every agreeable creature that comes in her way.

Frivolous as the times are, I have some comfort in thinking that the enormous attempt at bringing Macbeth into a dance at the opera would not take. I was extremely outrageous at this, and said the other day to Lady Mount Edgecombe that the times were so depraved I expected to live to see the Iliad cut down into an interlude. "Yes," replied she, "and it will be the only way in which some of our young men will learn the classics." The frequent fires here are dreadful. I have been to look on the ruins of the Thatched House; but sweet Wimbledon* is the most grievous loss. They went from London by fifties to plunder; and while the house was in flames, multitudes were dead drunk in the cellars. It makes one ashamed of one's species. "Yet, there go I," said holy Ridley, when he met a man going to the gallows, "but for the grace of God."

I am just going to flirt a couple of hours with my beau, General Oglethorpe. Enclosed you have my letter written as from Jean Jacques Rousseau. I could not comply with your desire sooner, as Mr. H. ran away with it.†

* Lord Spencer's.

† This supposed letter was addressed to a gentleman who was fascinated to a very dangerous degree with the talents of that great but corrupt genius, and was accompanied by a trumpery picture of him, which she had picked up merely for this purpose. Madame de Staël having formerly presented Miss More with her work on Rousseau, she suffered a copy of this letter to be shown to her when she was in England, and had expressed an intention of visiting Barley Wood, that she might be fully apprized of her opinion of his character and writings.

LETTRE DE JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU, AVEC SON PORTRAIT.

Ame sensible ! Voici le portrait d'un homme dont tu as sçu apprecier le mérite. J'étois digne de l'admiration de mon siecle, et je l'ai obtenu ; c'étoit peu ; j'ai voulu qu'on me dressa des autels. Je pensois que le seul objet digne du cûlte humain étoit Jean Jacques. J'aurois voulu qu'il n'y eût eu que Jean Jacques dans l'univers ; que lui seul tint lieu de tout le genre humain. N'ayant pû être l'objet de l'adoration des hommes j'ai voulu être celui de leurs persecutions ; j'aimois mieux être persecuté que negligé ; la calomnie m'outrageoit, mais l'oubli m'auroit assommé.

Je réunissois en moi tout ce que le cœur humain a de plus noble et de plus bas : Enthousiaste pour ce que la vertu a de grand, de sublime, d'impratiquable même, je me crûs autorisé à franchir les bornes prescrites aux âmes ordinaires. Ayant fait l'éloge de la chasteté j'ai vécu dans un commerce illicite avec un femme dont j'ai celebré la pureté. J'ai senti, j'ai écrit comme Platon, mais ma vie fut celle d'un homme ordinaire, d'un homme vil.

Tous mes gouts furent des passions, j'avois des accés de la plus sublime devotion. J'admirois tout ce que la réligion avoit de brilliant, mais je redoutois ce qu'elle avoit de pénible.

Sensible, tendre, inégal, capricieux, inconsequent, j'ai fait l'apotheose du genre humain sans aimer les hommes. J'ai consacré à l'immortalité des gens méprisables, et j'ai maltraité ceux qui m'ont fait du bien. Me rendre service c'étoit me faire un affront sanglant ; je savois pardonner une injure et non un bienfait.

Quant à mes ecrits, celui qui pourra les lire sans ravissement doit avoir le cœur froid et dur, l'esprit borné et frivole. Quel feu divin ! quelle passion ! quelles graces naïves et tendres ! Pour lire les autres auteurs il ne faut que du goût, pour savourer Jean Jacques il faudroit une âme ; pour lire les autres il faudroit juger, pour lire Rousseau il faut sentir.

Je n'ai pas voulu faire du mal peut-être, et j'en ai fait ; plus vain qu'incrédule je croyois n'aimer que la verité, et j'ai aimé encore plus la singularité ; j'ai voulu me distinguer, j'ai voulu être philosophe, nom qui en impose, et je me suis perdu dans l'abyme de la métaphisique.

Citoyen du monde ! homme de bien ! ami du genre humain ! Philosophe, voilà les beaux titres auxquels j'aspirois ; mais souvent quand je croyois débiter la morale je n'étalois que du sentiment ; clinquant qui brille d'avantage, mais qui n'a rien de solide.

From the same to the same.

Adelphi, 1785.

Boswell tells me he is printing *anecdotes* of Johnson, not his *life*, but, as he has the vanity to call it, his *pyramid*. I besought his tenderness for our virtuous and most revered departed friend, and begged he would mitigate some of his asperities. He said, roughly, "He would not cut off his claws, nor make a tiger a cat, to please anybody." It will, I doubt not, be a very amusing book, but I hope not an indiscreet one; he has great enthusiasm, and some fire. The Bishop of Gloster (Dr. Hallifax) did me the honour of calling upon me. I have since been there of an evening, and we are become great friends; they seem amiable people.

I have had a great deal of conversation with Mr. Anstey. I found him obliging and polite, but he is one of those poets who are better to read than to see. I think him a real genius in the way of wit and humour: but he appears to be of a shy and silent cast, and to prefer the quiet solemnity of a whist-table to talking parties. On Wednesday we had a great dinner at home, for the first time this year, Mrs. Garrick disliking company more and more. The party consisted of the Smelts, the Montagues, the Boyles, the Walsinghams, Mrs. Carter, Mr. Walpole, and Miss Hamilton. Though I like them every one separately, yet it was impossible to enjoy them all together: and I never desire to sit down with more than six, or eight at the outside, to dinner. I have had an affecting business on my hands. The wife of Dr. Adams, Master of Pembroke College, is dead, and his friends prevailed on him to set out for London, to be out of the way during the last sad ceremonies; so he came to the hotel next to us, in order for me to devote myself to him as much as possible. Our first meeting was very affecting. I never saw any thing so meek and so resigned. But it is a heavy blow at almost eighty!

We had a splendid dinner in Stratford-place,* indeed much too magnificent, and too many people, for comfort; all literati. Among them Sir Joshua, the two Wartons, and Tyrwhitt. Dr. Warton was, as usual, very enthusiastic and very agreeable. We staid till near twelve. Mrs. Montagu, in a whisper, engaged us to dine privately with her the next day; so we staid on purpose, and had nobody but dear Mrs. Carter; which I liked vastly. We spent the evening at Mrs. Vesey's last Thursday, with Mr. Walpole and Dowager Lady Townsend; a woman who has *said* more good things than any living person, but who I believe has not done quite so many. Poor Mr. —— could not talk much; but seemed to enjoy the conversation. When I shook hands with him, I said to myself,

* Mrs. Walsingham's.

"I shall never see you again;" and so it is likely to prove; for he has lain senseless ever since. Poor man! he has not the dispositions suited to his advanced age, and his near prospect of death. Soame Jenyns, too, is in great trouble. We spent the evening agreeably together, and Mrs. Jenyns was taken that very night with a fever, and is dangerously ill. I tremble for an event which is to destroy a union of such perfect harmony, and put an end to an attachment which continues to be a passion very long after fourscore.

Sir Charles and Lady Middleton dined here last Tuesday, and in the evening we had a magnificent *bas bleu*, at which I think assisted almost every creature that adorns that fraternity. We had much pleasant and some profitable discussion.

From the same to the same.

Glanvilla, June* 16, 1785.

We left Teston on Monday. Poor Lady Middleton still in bed with a fever! the only drawback to a visit which was otherwise so delightful. It is a charming mansion. We spent the evening with Miss Hamilton; who, I fancy, will have another name by the time you get this letter. I was much amused with hearing old Leonidas Glover sing his own fine ballad of "Hosier's Ghost," which was very affecting. He is past eighty.

Mr. Walpole coming in just afterward, I told him how highly I had been pleased. He begged me to entreat for a repetition of it. I suppose you recollect that it was the satire conveyed in this little ballad upon the conduct of Sir Robert Walpole's ministry, which is thought to have been a remote cause of his resignation. It was a very curious circumstance to see his son listening to the recital of it with so much complacency. Such is the effect of the lapse of time.

I have rarely heard a more curious instance of the absence of mind produced by poetic enthusiasm, than that which occurred when the author of Leonidas made one of a party of literati assembled at the house of Mr. Gilbert West, at Wickham. Lord Lyttleton, on opening his window one morning, perceived Glover pacing to and fro with a whip in his hand, by the side of a fine bed of tulips just ready to blow, and which were the peculiar care of the lady of the mansion, who worshipped Flora with as much ardour as Glover did the Muses. His mind was at that instant teeming with the birth of some little ballad, when Lord Lyttleton, to his astonishment and dismay, perceived him applying his whip with great vehemence to the stalks of the unfortunate tulips; all of which, before there was time to awaken him from his revery, he had completely levelled with the ground; and when the devastation he had com-

* Mrs. Boscawen's seat.

mitted was afterward pointed out to him, he was so perfectly unconscious of the proceeding that he could with difficulty be made to believe it.

I spent a couple of evenings, the last week I was in town, with only Mr. Walpole and Miss Hamilton. The former read some productions of his own to us. He is gone down to Strawberry Hill, where is his printing press, to collect all his works; which, when bound, are to be sent after me to Bristol, to help towards making a library at "Cowslip Green." He likes the name, and says it is a relation, a cousin at least, to "Strawberry Hill." He likes the plan and drawing mightily; and so does Mr. Smelt, with whom I spent a pleasant evening, a day or two before I set out. The cottage has travelled about to them all in turn, so that they all know every creek and corner of the little mansion.

PART III.

FROM THE YEAR A. D. 1785 TO A. D. 1802.

CHAPTER I.

THE letter just produced was the last we find written from Hannah More to her sister during her visit to Mrs. Garrick in the spring of 1785. And at this period we observe the genuine characteristics of her mind more fully and forcibly in operation.

We have long been regarding her in the crowded scenes of gayety and greatness, moving within a fairy circle, where all that could captivate the sensibility and betray the understanding of a trusting heart and a capacious head were leagued against her.

In the midst of these disturbing influences, an interior guide suggested the duty of religious recollection and self-inquiry; and it was well known to her intimate friends how cordially she welcomed the serious hour and the salutary pause, which let in upon her mind the solemn and substantial purposes for which she was intended and qualified, and brought before her a brighter world and purer subjects of thought and aspiration.

A candid examiner of her letters will discern in them, as their dates come nearer to the present time, a growing conviction of the unsatisfactoriness of all enjoyments which are not in accordance with Scripture, and in unison with prayer. And while many of her friends and companions remained contented where she found them, till their places knew them no more, Hannah More was advancing in religious attainments, and listening to the vocation that summoned her to solid glory. Prayer, the frequent perusal of Holy Scripture, and the strict observance of the Sabbath kept her mind in a healthful state, and her feet in "the walk of wisdom."

She began, about this time, to contract the circle of her acquaintance, with a view to carry into execution the resolution she had long cherished, of passing a portion of her time in the retirement of the country. Having become the possessor of a

little secluded spot which had acquired the name of "Cowslip Green," near Bristol, the occupation of dressing and cultivating her garden brought back the peaceful associations of her early days.

It will not appear extraordinary to those who have observed how domineering an influence the tide of opportunity, habit, and solicitation will maintain for a time over the real and permanent bias of reason and principle, that the seated preferences of Miss More's better judgment should, in the sanguine season of youth, have yielded to the world and its flatteries. But that early feeling which prompted her infant wish for "a habitation too low for a clock," was still fresh in her bosom.

After the surprise of her sudden elevation and distinction was over, her first love appeared to return. The country, with its "green pastures and its still waters," began to call her back to the element in which such exercises and inquiries might be pursued as were most profitable and least perishable.

Still, however, her sensibility to kindness would not allow her to withhold herself from her friends in London; and her annual visits to Mrs. Garrick brought her frequently, though less frequently, into contact with the world and its crowded resorts. Her mornings, however, were generally her own during her stay in London, and her mornings were not vacant or unconsecrated. Neither did the opportunities which the parties of the evening afforded her, of advocating truth and enforcing duty, pass unimproved.

In polished societies she never forgot her allegiance to truth; and her tongue was bold, where pomp and pleasure made it most unwelcome, to proclaim those principles which her pen afterward so successfully vindicated, at the hazard of being discarded and disclaimed.

Many of the reflections and animadversions of a sternly virtuous complexion, but which fell with great weight upon passing events and existing characters, have been withdrawn from those letters which have been already presented to the public, from an apprehension of imparting pain where pain could no longer conduce to amendment, of wounding family feelings, or of reviving sorrowful recollections; and it is to be remembered, that in her letters to her sisters she was pouring out her heart, on some subjects, under the seal of the strictest confidence. Not to have animadverted with severity upon the prescriptive immoralities of the fashionable scenes which had suddenly opened upon her, would have suggested a doubt of her discernment, or a suspicion of her integrity. Youth, novelty, flattery, kindness, and splendour were conspiring to impede her progress in wisdom; yet her thoughts revolted against the system in which she was implicated, and often broke out in the language of becoming indignation against the manners of those who were raising altars to her genius.

From Mrs. Kennicott to Miss H. More.

Mongewell House,* 1786.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

If you have expected to hear from me before, and have been disappointed, it has been your own fault, and your favourite Paley's; for all the leisure minutes I have had in my own apartment have been devoted to his merit and your recommendation. I like him exceedingly, and our dear bishop likes him, which is more to the purpose. But I agree with you in reprobating some of his Sabbatical notions; nor do I assent to some of his other notions. I have, however, read the book, as far as I have gone, with great delight.

This sweet place has abounded with social and solitary pleasures. Charming weather for sauntering and sitting abroad with a book in one's hand; fancying one is reading, but really looking at the sheep, listening to the waterfall, and not turning over three little pages in half an hour; but meditating with marvellous wisdom when one does pick up a sentiment, especially if it be sublime. We have had too much company; in short, there must be a something to find fault with, and I question whether there will not be some little *but* even at Cowslip Green. Alas! there was a great one the day which you and your friends expected so much pleasure from; but you are a good little bee, and extract sweet honey from bitter herbs: and every mortification strengthens your virtue. Yet I can not help grieving when these mortifications are the consequence of bad health. Dr. Stonehouse thought it might do you good, and that it certainly would him, if you went to Cheverel for a little time. I wish you could have got quietly to Cowslip Green, out of the way of Prince Galitzin, and all the other *potentates*.

The dean† pretends to be very sorry he did not see you when you were at Oxford, but he thought you were come to stay a month. I told him we could not flatter ourselves with having the honour of a visit from the *proud dean*, for so you styled him. He said he thought himself remarkable for his humility. I think you are both right; for he is spiritually one of the humblest, and profanely one of the proudest men I know. I can tell what I mean myself,—can you tell what I mean? Talking of deans, the Dean of Canterbury‡ tells me that he wants to persuade you to write a didactic poem on conversation; I wish he may be successful in his endeavours, but I dread your modesty.

Bless me! I have got almost to the third page, and not a

* The seat of Bishop Barrington, which he obtained in right of his wife, the niece of Sir William Guise.

† Dr. Jackson, Dean of Christ Church.

‡ Dr. Horne.

word of my visit to Cowslip Green. I am determined to be rammed, crammed, and jammed there next year; so I desire you will have no schemes that will interfere with my accompanying you from Oxford. I long to be twining honeysuckles, broiling chops, and talking sentiment with you, my dear friend Patty, and our excellent gipsy cook; while governess beholds us with astonishment, and sister Betty is preparing for us in the house, with the vain expectation that we shall, some time or other, come into it, and look like gentlefolks.

I too paid a visit to Mrs. Montagu at Sandleford. I like her grounds exceedingly; I like the plan of her house for summer, but I doubt it will want comforts long before that season of the year when London has joys.

You led me into a curious scrape by your intelligence relative to Lord Walsingham. I was regardless of the newspaper paragraphs, but when I had *your* authority, I wrote to congratulate his lordship upon his appointment; and as I know he loves to have every thing according to order, I directed my letter to *his excellency*, you know now with how much propriety. If he were to go to Spain, I wish at my heart you might indeed be appointed his *secretary!* I should like, as well as poor Johnson would have liked, to read your travels into Spain,* but it would give me a thousand times more pleasure to trace your good influences over my lord's mind.

I do not like Soame Jenyns's epigram. I do not love to have one of the most valuable of the human species called a brute and bear. Tell me how you like Dr. Beattie's book. I suppose you know that Miss Burney is appointed dresser to her majesty, in the room of Mrs. ——.

We have just been breakfasting most pleasantly under a tree; I suppose you abjure roofs, and enjoy all kinds of gipsying. Pray send me an account of *one* day at Cowslip Green. My kind love to all the sisterhood.

Ever most affectionately yours,

A. KENNICOTT.

We will now take up again the series of her letters to her sister from the house of her friend Mrs. Garrick.

From Hannah More to her sister.

February, 1786.

We are come to town, but Mrs. Garrick talks much of the charms of the country, where I think she has acted her winter pastoral rather too long; for the cold is so intense, that the best pleasure I have found for a long time is to sit over a great

* When Johnson was speaking with censure of some travels to that country, then just published, he turned to Hannah More and said, "Child, I should like to send you to Spain; you would write just such travels as I should be pleased to read."

fire and read Cowper's Poems. I am enchanted with this poet; his images so natural and so much his own! Such an original and philosophic thinker! such genuine Christianity! and such a divine simplicity! but very rambling, and the order not very lucid. He seems to put down every thought as it arises, and never to retrench or alter any thing. I have hardly the courage to stir, and have refused several invitations out of pity to man and beast; I dined, however, the other day with Mrs. Montagu.

A previous engagement will prevent my dining at Lord Mount Edgecombe's to-morrow, which, as there will be a great many of my friends there, I should have liked very well, but I have laid it down as an act of moral turpitude to break any engagement because something happens to present itself which you like rather better. I have just been debating, till I am out of breath, with a very great and wise lady on this subject. She laughed, and said it was a ridiculous scruple, but that once she had been as good as I. I told her I wish I had known her in those days.

From the same to the same.

London, Feb. 7, 1786.

I really have not found a moment's time to write since I came here, one is so hurried and bustled about; and has so many nothings to do which yet must be done, and so many foolish notes to write which yet must be written. I had, however, yesterday, a comfortable solitary Sunday. I am here alone. I have not yet seen a great many of my friends. 'Tis true I have dined out nearly every day with some kind people, who have fetched me and brought me home, but I have not gone to evening parties. I want a little time to break myself in, so as to take to it kindly. I made poor Vesey go with me, on Saturday, to see Mr. Walpole, who has had a long illness. Notwithstanding his sufferings, I never found him so pleasant, so witty, and so entertaining. He said a thousand diverting things about Florio,* but accused me of having imposed on the world by a dedication full of falsehood, meaning the compliment to himself. I never knew a man suffer pain with such entire patience. This submission is certainly a most valuable part of religion, and yet, alas! he is not religious. I must, however, do him the justice to say, that except the delight he has in teasing me for what he calls over-strictness, I have never heard a sentence from him which savoured of infidelity.

I was at a small party the other night, of which Mr. Burke was one. He appeared to be very low in health and spirits; he talked to me with a kindness which revived my old affection for him. We had several other opposition wits that evening:

* This poetical tale has been lately published with the Bas Bleu.

among others, Lord North, who was delightfully entertaining, and told some excellent stories, at which he has a very good talent, possessing in perfection the art of grave humour. Mrs. Fielding and I, like pretty little misses, diverted ourselves with teaching Sir Joshua and Lord Palmerston the play of twenty questions, and thoroughly did we puzzle them by picking out little obscure insignificant things which we collected from ancient history. Lord North, overhearing us, desired to be initiated into this mysterious game, and it was proposed that I should question him: I did so, but his twenty questions were exhausted before he came near the truth; as he at length gave up the point, I told him my thought was the earthen lamp of Epictetus. "I am quite provoked at my own stupidity," said his lordship, "for I quoted that very lamp last night in the House of Commons."

I was the other day at Lady Mount Edgecombe's, who repeated her invitation for the Mount Edgecombe visit next summer with the most earnest politeness. I gave her to understand that I was afraid it must be left for another year; the truth is, I intend to get off all summer invitations, that I may have the more time for Cowslip Green, which place, I hope, will favour my escape from the world gradually.

I dined the other day with Mrs. Walsingham, and went in the evening to Lady Middleton's to meet Lord and Lady Dartmouth; he is the nobleman who, you know, Cowper says—"wears a coronet, and prays." The attorney-general and Lady Louisa Macdonald wait to convey me to Sir Robert Herries, where we dine together. And now I hope to receive due praise for my implicit obedience in gratifying your insatiable curiosity with an account of almost every dinner I have eaten, and every person to whom I have spoken.

To the same.

London, March, 1786.

When I sent word last night to poor Mrs. Vesey that I was coming to her, she was so afraid she should not make it agreeable that she immediately sent for Mr. Burke to meet me; he was engaged, but his son came with Mr. Wyndham, an accomplished man, but too warm a politician. We took to each other mightily, and renewed our old acquaintance made in the gay days of Hampton; for we used then to meet there with the Sheridan party. Richard Burke is an amiable young man, but not an adequate substitute for such a father.

Mr. Walpole tells me that there is a very curious work now in press—"Private Letters written in the reign of Henry IV." These, as they are undoubtedly genuine, are in themselves a great curiosity, as they are above a hundred years older than any letters we have in the English language; their literary merit I suppose is not great; they are family letters about

domestic concerns, with the news of the then day, and the politics of the times during the Lancasterian wars. They are to be printed in the old spelling on one page, and modernized on the other. I fancy we shall not meet with any quotations from Rowley. To the lovers of antiquities and anecdote they will be very amusing; as for me, I have no great appetite for any thing merely as being curious, unless it has other merits. These letters have been preserved in the family of the Pastons in Norfolk.

We are going for a few days to Hampton. I shall delight in a little quiet and fresh air, two commodities not to be had in any of the London markets.

To the same.

London, April, 1786.

I invite myself to dine with poor Mrs. Vesey (whose spirits are still terribly depressed) whenever I have a vacant day. She is only cheerful when she has one or two friends about her, and there are a little set who generally go to her in turn every day. Yesterday Mrs. Carter and I met there, and I had made an assignation with Mr. Walpole in the evening; we had likewise Mr. Burke. The vivacity of this wonderfully great man is much diminished; business and politics have impaired his agreeableness; but neither years nor sufferings can abate the entertaining powers of the pleasant Horace, which rather improve than decay; though he himself says he is only fit to be a milkwoman, as the chalk-stones at his fingers' ends qualify him for nothing but *scoring;* but he declares he will not be a *Bristol milkwoman*. I was obliged to recount to him all that odious tale.

I was the other day at a most agreeable party at Lady Galway's. Mrs. Fielding, Mrs. Carter, Lord North, Lord Macartney, and myself were in one little set, and they were very entertaining. Lord Macartney is one of the most agreeable men I know, of polished mind, and fine taste; besides the rare merit which he possesses of having brought clean hands and a pure fame from India. To meet these gentlemen in assemblies, and in crowds, where the most stupid and illiterate make just as good a figure, is not seeing them at all; but it is pleasant to come at them in these select societies, which we are to have often of a Saturday, it being the only day the Houses do not sit.

Mrs. Piozzi's book is much in fashion. It is indeed entertaining; but there are two or three passages exceedingly unkind to Garrick, which filled me with indignation. If Johnson had been envious enough to utter them, she might have been prudent enough to suppress them. Johnson with all his genius had no taste for Garrick's acting, and with all his virtues was envious of his riches; this led him very unjustly to say severe things, which Garrick not unfrequently retorted; but why

must these things be recorded? The speaker, perhaps, had forgotten them, or was sorry for them, or did not mean them; but this new-fashioned biography seems to value itself upon perpetuating every thing that is injurious and detracting.

I perfectly recollect the candid answer Garrick once made to my inquiry why Johnson was so often harsh and unkind in his speeches both of and to him,—"Why, *Nine*," he replied, "it is very natural; is it not to be expected he should be angry, that I, who have so much less merit than he, should have had so much greater success?"

The book, however, *in general*, places Johnson's character very high. I expressed myself with some warmth to Lælius against these passages, saying, however, that I was glad she had done justice to my *living* friends at least. His learning in particular is very highly commended.

To the same.

London, April, 1786.

The Bozzi, &c. subjects are not yet exhausted, though everybody seems heartily sick of them. Everybody, however, conspires not to let them drop. That, and the "Cagliostro," and the "Cardinal's Necklace," spoil all conversation, and destroyed a very good evening at Mr. Pepys's last night. The party was snug, and of my own bespeaking, consisting only of Mr. Walpole, Mrs. Montagu, the Burneys, and Cambridge.

I have had a very long and entertaining letter from Girard.* He gives such an account of the pedantry and precieuseté of the ladies of Paris as is quite ridiculous. There is a new Lyceum, under the inspection of Marmontel and the other savans; there, he says, the *femmes de qualité*, the *petites maîtres*, and the *bourgeoiserie meme en robe de chambre* run to study philosophy, and neglect their families to be present at lectures of anatomy. I hope we shall never have any of these sort of institutions here, which would be only multiplying public places, and add to dissipation instead of increasing knowledge.

It was my lot the other day at dinner to sit between two travellers, famous for making geography their whole subject; the one is as fond of talking of the east as the other is of the north; the former poured the Ganges into one of my ears, and the latter the Danube into the other, and the confluence of these two mighty rivers deluged all my ideas till I did not know what they were talking about, especially as I like *things* much better than *words*.

I am this day in the full enjoyment of a most complete holyday—Mrs. Garrick is gone to Hampton. I have refused all invitations, and have ordered that nobody should be let in, that

* One of the French academicians, with whom she corresponded some years.

I may have the luxury of one quiet uninterrupted day. I awoke with great delight in the very anticipation of it.

The Bishop of Chester brought me home from Soame Jenyns's the other night. We had there almost all I know that is wise, learned, and witty; but there were too many, and we all complained of a superfluity of good things. Cambridge said we should have made eight of the best parties in London. He gave us a specimen of Johnson's manner, "Poetry, madam, is like brown bread; those who make it at home never approve of what they meet with elsewhere."

I was asked lately to a great assembly, where I should have met all the *corps diplomatique*, but it was not worth while to lose an evening and get the headache, only to see a few ambassadors and envoys make low bows, drink orangeade, and play at whist. I have kept my resolution to avoid these great crowds, except when I have been snared into an assembly under the alluring name of a little private party, into which trap I have fallen several times.

I spent quite a rational sober country day on Thursday, with the wise and virtuous Langton and Lady Rothes; so peaceful, I could not persuade myself I was in London; dined at three; sat and worked while he read to us, or talked of books, till late at night. I really begin to hope we are reforming; for on Saturday I got another such sober day at Mrs. Montagu's, with only the Smelts, and we all agreed we had not been more comfortable for a long time; and yet people have rarely the sense or courage to do these things, but still must meet in herds and flocks.

To the same.

London, May, 1786.

We have had a great but pleasant dinner at the Bishop of Salisbury's, which was the more valuable as we had so much difficulty to achieve it; and a good old *bas bleu* dinner at Mrs. Vesey's, such as she used to give in her happier days, and which put her in spirits, as it brought back those days to her mind. I sat next my Lord Macartney, who never fails to furnish abundance of lively matter for interesting conversation. Lady Mount Edgecombe made another very kind attack upon my constancy, to prevail with me to come to her in the summer; but I remained impenetrable to her eloquence, great and obliging as it was. I could have parodied Ulysses' speech in Telemaque, "Pour moi, je préfére ma pauvre petite isle, ses choux et ses rochers, à toute votre magnificence."

I have naturally but a small appetite for grandeur, which is always satisfied, even to indigestion, before I leave this town; and I require a long abstinence to get any relish for it again; yet, I repeat, these are very agreeable people, but there is dress, there is restraint, there is want of leisure, to which I find it difficult to conform for any length of time,—and life is short.

I sometimes get an interesting morning visiter; of two or three I have entertained some hope that they were beginning to think seriously. Lady B. and I had a long discourse yesterday; she seems anxious for religious information. I told her much plain truth, and she bore it so well that I ventured to give her Doddridge. If she should not stumble at the threshold, from the strong manner in which the book opens, I trust she will read it with good effect. Miss —— has been also with me several times—beautiful and accomplished, surrounded with flatterers, and sunk in dissipation. I asked her why she continued to live so much below, not only her principles, but her understanding—what pleasure she derived from crowds of persons so inferior to herself—did it make her happy? Happy! she said, no; she was miserable. She despised the society she lived in, and had no enjoyment of the pleasures in which her life was consumed; but what could she do? She could not be singular—she must do as her acquaintance did. I pushed it so home on her conscience, that she wept bitterly, and embraced me. I conjured her to read her Bible, with which she is utterly unacquainted. These fine creatures are, I hope, sincere, when they promise to be better; but the very next temptation that comes across them puts all their good intentions to flight, and they go on as if they had never formed them; nay, all the worse for having formed and not realized them. They shall have my prayers, which are the most effectual part of our endeavours.

From the same to the same.

London, May 10, 1786.

I hope our engagements are now pretty well drawing to a close. I was engaged the last four days to Lady Bathurst, Lady Amherst, Lady Cremorne, and Lady Mount Edgecombe. I went through three of them manfully, coughing and croaking with great success.

Sir Joshua is doing a picture for the Empress of Russia, but I do not think he has chosen his subject happily, and so I ventured to tell his friend Burke, the other night, though he warmly defended him. The empress left the subject to him, and desired to have a capital work of his in her collection. The story he has taken is Hercules strangling the young serpents. I think he might have chosen better than that stale piece of mythology. Mr. Walpole suggested to Sir Joshua an idea for a picture, which he thought would include something honourable to both nations; the scene Deptford, and the time when the Czar Peter was receiving a ship-carpenter's dress in exchange for his own, to work in the dock. This would be a great idea, and much more worthy of the pencil of the artist than nonsensical Hercules.

I have always had a great curiosity to converse with a dis-

ciple of Mahomet, and it was gratified the other day by my being invited to meet the Turkish ambassador. His suite, I think, consisted of six Mussulmans. They took their coffee sitting cross-legged on the floor. I confined my attention entirely to his excellency, who was placed next to me on the sofa, and did not sit cross-legged. His dragoman is a very sensible agreeable person, and speaks all languages. The ambassador, a good solemn-looking Turk, was very communicative; his son stood the whole evening behind the sofa on which his father sat. I obtained considerable information about their usages and manners. At my desire, they spoke together a little Arabic, which is a very pretty-sounding language. They had, I believe, some hopes of bringing me over to the faith of the prophet, for they recommended me to read Sale's edition of the Alcoran. In return, I think, I should have advised them to read White's Sermons. I asked how they contrived to exercise their religion in this country without a mosque. They told me that every great man in their country was both priest and lawyer, and allowed to exercise all the functions of both; that the ambassador did the duties of religion in his own house; and the Turk added, "I do not know how those" (pointing to some statesmen who sat at a distance) "lords do, but I am not ashamed to own that I retire five times a day to offer prayer and oblation." This he partly explained to me in broken Italian, and the rest was interpreted to me by the secretary.

I believe I have not mentioned Lord Monboddo this winter. I had a memorable quarrel with him one night lately; it was about Shakspeare and John Home. He said Douglas was a better play than Shakspeare could have written. He was angry, and I was pert. I called in Mrs. Montagu to my aid, and very saucy things we did say, which provoked him highly. Lord Mulgrave sat spiriting me up, but kept out of the scrape himself, and Lord Stormont seemed to enjoy the debate, but was shabby enough not to help me out. With his fine dry humour, he would have had the advantage of us all. I was really very much diverted, though I was angry too; for the prejudiced Scotch critic, by rating Douglas so much above its real merit, made me appear unjust by seeming to undervalue it; but when he said that Shakspeare had no conception of drawing a king or a hero—that there was not so interesting a discovery in the whole of his works as that of Lady Randolph and her son, and that the passions were always vulgarly delineated,—it was impossible to be temperate, and difficult to be just. I suppose when, on a former occasion, he declared that no modern could turn a period finely, he meant to make an exception in favour of Scotch authors.

We have had a numerous party to dinner; among others, Mr. and Mrs. Swinburne the travellers, with whom I am lately be-

come much acquainted; they are people who have been a good deal distinguished in different courts. The lady is the more agreeable of the two, though she has not, like her husband, written three quarto volumes about Spain and Calabria. They live chiefly abroad, and are great bigots to popery. She is the great friend of the Queen of Naples, and not less a favourite of the Queen of France—a singular pair of friendships for an Englishwoman of no rank.

Teston, June 4, 1786.

We have been a week at this sweet place,* with these sweet people. Mrs. E. Bouverie lives with the Middletons in town, and they with her here. Her character has something sublime in it; but you must know her well to admire her as I do, for she is reserved to strangers. With a cultivated mind and a most thinking head, she only produces herself in our *tête-à-têtes:* her charities are boundless. Lady Middleton is very excellent, and very different; she is made up of feeling and compassion. Her kindness, which you would think must needs be exhausted on the negroes, extends to the sufferings of every animal. She never, as Beattie says, "worked the wo of any living thing." Sir Charles is obliged to leave us to attend to the birthday. You would be delighted too with his character. He has the stern and simple virtues of the old school. Mrs. Garrick carried me as far as Sandleford Priory on Monday the 12th. I remain four days with Mrs. Montagu, and hope to sleep in Bristol on the 17th. Lady Spencer came herself to prevail upon us to go to her, for a little time, at St. Alban's, but I could not resolve upon prolonging my stay from home. This agreeable place, fine air, and cultivated and pious society have quite set me up again. I was invited to a prodigiously fine concert, a few days ago, to hear *all the Rubinellis and Maras;* but having for some time declined all great parties, I did not go; besides, I was going where I could hear the nightingales for nothing. I dined one of the last days before I left town at the Pepyses'; and I think it was one of the wittiest and most brilliant dinners I was ever present at. Since the old times I think I have not heard so much pleasant discussion. I went to a select party to meet Mr. Smelt and Mr. and Mrs. Hastings. He is a man of remarkable simplicity of manners, dress, and deportment: full of admirable good sense: nothing of the nabob about him. The Bishop of Chester declares he will come some time or other to *Cowslip Green.*

* Mrs. Bouverie's

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

1786.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Much has been written in verse and prose on the fallaciousness of hope: but no one was ever so seriously enraged at it as I have been ever since I received your letter of the 24th. What! having indulged with such sensibility the hope of having you here in June, then in July, and then August, and now you would put me off to the 15th of September! and when hope deferred had made the heart sick, instead of the cordial of several weeks of your charming society you talk of one single week! Oh, my dear madam! for pity's sake come as soon as you can; get your trunks packed up, stay here till the last week in October, and then I will allow hope to be, though a tardy, a generous paymaster. Then your pretence of waiting till you can make an assignation with Mrs. Garrick! What business have two ladies to make assignations with each other? If you had both made an assignation to meet Dr. Warton, you had done wisely for yourselves and happily for me; for he would not then have disappointed me of the visit he promised me in the course of these holydays. I cannot think of Dr. Warton and you meeting anywhere but at Sandleford without turning pale with envy.

What a treasure has been discovered if the letters are really Madame de Sevigné's! If they are not genuine we shall soon perceive it, for *le je ne sais quoi* is of all things the most inimitable and impossible to be counterfeited. Minerva without the assistance of the Graces could not have woven *le bas bleu*, nor could the Muses, from their academy, have produced Florio without their happy touch; and even the Graces have this felicity only in their frolics. This *je ne sais quoi*, like the power attributed to magic, effects what the strongest faculties of nature and efforts of art combined cannot attain. It captivates *en badinant*, and the mind surrenders itself, it knows not why, to it knows not what. Oh! it is a pleasing tyrant! charms while it conquers, delights while it subjugates.

Doctor Ford's account of my lord-primate's state of health being so much improved since his arrival at Bristol makes me very happy. As nature so rarely forms such a being, she should put it into a case that would make it last her half a dozen centuries at least. However, there is one comfort, that these characters, like the sun when sunk below the horizon, still shed a light upon the world. I am very sorry to hear Dr. Hamilton has been ill, but I hope he is by this time quite recovered.

I am, dear madam,
with the most affectionate esteem,
Your most faithful humble servant,
ELIZABETH MONTAGU.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Cowslip Green, 1786.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Your most agreeable letter was the first, in priority of time, as well as value, that came to enliven my retreat, of which I have just taken possession. I spent a very pleasant week with Mrs. Montagu, at Sandleford, *en chemin faisant*. Her house is not so much advanced as I wished and expected, but her grounds are in great order, and wonderfully embellished. The place can never appear to so great advantage as to those who knew it in its unimproved state. I believe it preserves one of the last strokes of Brown's magic hand.

You are so good to me, my dear madam, that I know you will be glad to hear that I am comfortably established in my little cottage. It is a pleasant wild place, and I am growing a prodigious gardener, and make up by my industry for my want of science. I work in it two or three hours every day; and by the time the hour of visiting arrives, for even I have my visiters in this little corner, I am vastly glad of a pretence for sitting down. I am rather proud of my pinks and roses: the latter would not have been ashamed to hold up their heads before the Queen of Rosedale;* but a long succession of uninterrupted dry weather has a little shrivelled up these beauties, and made them wither before the short term of their natural life was near an end. Yours, I hope, have had a better fortune and a longer date.

As to books, *je n'en sais rien;* I lead a kind of lawless life; and were it not, as Dogberry says, that reading and writing come by nature, I believe my present vagrant life would make me forego all the habits and customs of civilization. I wish, however, I could read a German translation of a little book you, my dear madam, are very good to—the "Sacred Dramas," which is just sent me by a person I never heard of, from abroad, with many pretty cuts of the principal scenes neatly engraved.

I am going to Bristol for a little time; not having yet appeared to any of my friends in this hemisphere. I intend to see the Bishop of Gloucester and Mrs. Halifax, who are, I am sorry to say, come to the hot wells for her health. Hers is a very important life. She is the careful mother of a numerous little race, and has much impaired her health by maternal anxiety. I hope you get good accounts of Mrs. Delany, and that the late atrocious attempt on the dear king, which I believe made all English blood run cold, did not terrify her to the injury of her health.

My dear madam,

Your ever obliged and affectionate

H. MORE.

* Rosedale was now Mrs. Boscawen's country-seat.

From the same to the same.

Bristol, 1786.

MY DEAR MADAM,

You are infinitely too good; first to write me a kind letter, and then to point out the ways and means to convey my little gentleman* to you, with a solicitude to which his merits bear not the smallest proportion; and then, after my disobedience to all your flattering commands, to invite my nearer approach. I would it were an approach *au pied de la lettre, en chair et en os*, not a distant, imaginary, unimbodied approach of airy syllables. The true reason why Florio did not start up before you the moment you struck your baguette was, that I have lately been very unlucky in parcels, and have waited for a safe opportunity. Though it is so long ago, yet it is still fresh in my memory, that I was disappointed in the expectation of seeing you at Fulham in May. Long prescription had advanced that expectation into a sort of claim; so that I seemed to feel as if I had been robbed of a right; and as this is an age when people make a point of contending for all their rights, both real and imaginary, you will not wonder that I did not part with mine without a little mutiny and murmuring.

I hope, my dear madam, you found our venerable friend Mrs. Delany at Windsor, quite well, and easy, and happy. The royal friends have won my heart for ever, by their noble, and tender, and delicate generosity towards her; and yet there are moments when I can conceive, that though she must be charmed, even to oppression, by their goodness, yet this splendid invasion of her liberty may take away something of her repose and tranquillity. I am told she has not been a single day unvisited by these royal guests. I hope the sensibility of her spirit makes her find as much pleasure as honour in it: in that case it will not be too much for her.

Our foreigners are gone. We have lived much together. Prince Galitzin is well tempered and well bred; his governor delightful: we have set on foot a correspondence. He gives me a sad account of the present taste for letters in France: all point, turn, and epigram.

Think, dear madam, how agreeably I was surprised, a short time since, by a visit from Lady Juliana Penn, whom Lady de Clifford was so good as to bring. She has taken a house at Clifton for five months. She does me the honour to allow us to be excellent neighbours; and actually walks down the hills, and over all the stiles, which she begins to clamber with great success. Talking the other day, when I dined with her and Lady Charlotte Finch, of Mrs. Boscawen, Lady Juliana said, "I really believe I am in love with her; for I feel the oddest sen-

* Florio.

sation when I am with her, a sort of apprehension that she cannot like me to the degree I do her." This produces a diffidence in me which is extremely like what I suppose one feels when one is in love. We investigated the sentiment, and pronounced that it belonged to the passion above said. Lady Spencer has written me a high eulogium on Holywell house, in its improved state, with a warm invitation to me: but this visit I must steal out of the winter half-year.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

Audley-street, 1786.

I promised myself yesterday that I would write to my dear friend; but the post tingled and said, no—not to-day. Then came so rich a gift from her, that without extreme ingratitude I cannot wait for another tingling; and yet that very gift inclines me much more to read than to write; and if I do not turn Florio out of the room, I shall yet not thank you for the favour of his early visit. Certes, I do love him prodigiously; and I am proud to remember that he began to lisp at Glanvilla, and his infant steps, now so graceful, were trod upon my new-mown grass. He arrived yesterday as we were sitting after dinner; Lord and Lady Falmouth, Mrs. Leveson, a cousin or two, and myself. I cannot tell you how much of my favour Lady F. has gained, by gently opening the book, as it lay between us upon the table, and from that time never hearing any question, eating any orange, or minding anybody, or any thing, till her study was cruelly interrupted by "the coffee is above-stairs." So, how far she got in Florio's adventures I know not; but, I am sure, far enough to excite her eagerness for more.

Dear Florio! I shall delight in the guesses and surmises on his parentage and education. He will be concluded *bien né*, because of the perfect knowledge of the world, and of good company, which he possesses. How I delight in the hopes he first gave, that his peccadilloes might become vices; and that, having arrived at spoiling of dinners, he might grow fit for other spoils, treasons, and stratagems. But there are a thousand charming traits and delicate touches of which it were endless to speak. Come, my dear Florio, let us go down together, you, and I, and my spectacles; I want no other company. I hope I shall be able to procure a frank for this to-morrow. So I think I shall wait.

Thursday night.

I found myself exceedingly gratified at dinner to-day, by a chorus of panegyric on Florio, &c. &c.; Mr. Cole leading the band admirably, and giving us a great deal of recitative, well chosen, from l'Opera même. Lady Mount Edgecombe repeats line after line with such rapture, it would do you good to hear

her; *enfin, Florio, fait fortune;* but not above his merit: *je l'en defie.* And thus I bid you a good night, my very dear friend, only saying, with great truth and perfect sincerity, that I am your real admirer, F. B.

CHAPTER II.

Of the interval which Hannah More now passed at Cowslip Green we find no account supplied by her correspondence. It is probable she lived in great retirement, pursuing her gardening occupations, to which she was so much addicted by her tastes and affections. She visited Mrs. Garrick again in the December of this year (1786).

From H. More to one of her sisters.

London, Dec. 16, 1786.

I found Mrs. Garrick well. Next morning we sallied out, and called upon a few particular friends. Yesterday I dined at Mrs. Boscawen's; we had a comfortable, serious conversation, and in the evening she carried me to Mrs. Vesey's in my travelling dress. I did not find her so much broken as I expected since last year, though I grieve to say her memory is visibly impaired. I was sorry not to find Mr. Walpole. Instead of the pleasant Horace, I found only two or three formal women of quality, so I left Mrs. Boscawen to *anecdote* with them, and stole home in her coach. This dear friend expressed such a cordial delight to see me that it did my heart good.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1786.

Do I not write dull letters? You shall see, my dear friend. I received yesterday one that was *not* dull, and which contained many kind wishes, most affectionately expressed: these I return with the greatest sincerity. The post being late, I did not get this kind epistle till I was in my coach for the evening rendezvous at Mr. Cole's, where we had Mrs. Montagu & Co., Jenynses, Bishop of Exeter, Judge Ashurst, Bishop Watson, Lady Abdy, Lady Charlotte Tufton, the Veseys, with many others, and "our circle every figure took." The whist was banished into a petit cabinet apart, and there was a very snug corner in which I treated myself with your very kind epistle. I said to myself, what an agreeable addition would

the writer be to this party, and would find, *par ci et par la*, food for her *attention*.

I went to Opie's this morning, resolved I would no longer delay obtaining that for which others sue in vain. I have taken down his "days and hours of leisure," humbly to submit them to your choice. Wednesday the 25th, or Thursday the 26th, at any hour before four that you will be pleased to approve, I should rather say consent to, perhaps *submit* would be still more just,—I will call on you, and attend you, and read to you there to cheat the weary hour; and perhaps you will return with me to dinner. What say you, my dear madam? I promise you never to lend my picture to be engraved unless you order me; certes, it is worthy of Sir Joshua Reynolds's superior skill; but I can command Opie, and make him alter, or even refaire, if we do not like it. If you will have half as much patience as I have affection, then it will be sufficient to answer any demand that can be made upon it by

Your most attached friend,

F. B.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Hampton, 1786.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Some little contre tems has detained us here a fortnight beyond our bargain; we propose, however, certainly to be in town by the beginning of next week. I have been amusing myself, during a part of our solitude, with reading some of Madame de Sevigné's letters, and you cannot imagine, my dear madam, what a fund of entertainment I find as I go along in drawing a parallel between them and those of a certain lady, whom it is one of my greatest honours to be permitted to call my friend: the same admirable turn of expression, the same ease which when imitated is so stiff, and when natural is so full of grace: the same philanthropy, the same warm feelings, and, above all, the same excess of maternal tenderness—the same art of dignifying subjects in themselves of little moment, but which become amiable and interesting by some *true*, though seemingly *random* and *careless*, stroke, which shows the hand of a master, but of a master sketching for his amusement, and not finishing for the public. This rage for *finishing* may produce good essays and fine orations, but it makes frigid letters. For this reason, I think Voiture's letters are in bad taste; he always intends to be brilliant, and therefore is almost always affected—every passage seems written in its *very best* manner. Now to me the epistolary style is what it ought to be, when the writer, by a happy and becoming negligence, has the art of making you believe that he could write a great deal better if he would, but that he has too much judg-

ment to use great exertions on small occasions—he will not draw Ulysses' bow to shoot at a pigeon. It is not, however, that I think letter-writing trifling because it is familiar, any more than I think an epigram easy because it is short. My two models whom I *parallelized* (I believe there is no such word though) at the beginning of this scrawl, also resemble each other in one particular as much as they differ from the generality,—which is their perspicuity; their sense is never perplexed; their periods are not so long as to be involved, nor so short as to be affected; and there is in their manner a kind of luminous cast, which, like the sunshine of Claude, embellishes the most trifling objects. When a poet happens to be possessed of this transparency of expression, this vivid brightness, it gives a wonderful charm to his numbers.

But to go from poetry to painting.—And so, my dear madam, your partiality to your unworthy friend makes you determined to send her down to posterity by the only conveyance in which she can ever expect to reach it. I feel all the kindness of your intention, and I hope you will not think me ungrateful when I say that I have such a repugnance to having my picture taken, that I do not know any motive on earth which could induce me to it but your wishes, which, to me, are such indisputable commands, that any time on Wednesday you will please to appoint, I shall have the honour to attend you to Mr. Opie; and as I am sure the dinner with you will be the pleasantest part of the business to me, I shall wait for your commands as to both. En attendant, believe me, dear madam,

Ever yours,

H. M.

From Dr. Horne to Miss H. More.

Parade, 1786.

MY DEAR MADAM,

You will make me extremely happy by a sight of any production of yours calculated for the benefit of *the great and the gay*. Providence has led you to associate with them, as it raised Esther of old to the throne for this very purpose. We know how skilful an archer you are. With that bow in your hand, go on and prosper. I shall rejoice to read what you promise to send me. The justness of your sentiments, and the correctness of your language, can leave little work for a critic in the common acceptation of that word. Whatever may offer itself shall be put down on a separate sheet of paper, if you will honour me with the MS. by the bearer.

Believe me, my dear madam,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

G. HORNE.

From the same to the same.

Ramsgate, Aug. 16, 1786.

DEAR MADAM,

No event of my life has given me a more sincere pleasure than the circumstance of placing my dear little girl in a situation where so much attention will be paid to the improvement of her heart, as well as that of her head; where both abilities and disposition will be regulated, and all the tender branches of the young espalier be taught to shoot in proper directions. I shall entertain a high opinion of her steadiness, if she can retain the simplicity of her behaviour, and not be warped, by the extreme partiality of so many kind friends, into some degree of affectation. I admire your agreeable method of instructing her in her duty towards her poor neighbours. We can tell people their duty from the pulpit; but you have the art to make them desirous of performing it, as their greatest pleasure and amusement.

We are here in a most delightful spot of country, the Isle of Thanet, covered with corn of every kind, from whence the eye glances at once on the blue waves of the sea, and beholds the white cliffs of Calais rising out of them at about the distance of thirty miles. To the right lies the rich prospect of East Kent, stretching away towards the South Foreland; at our feet is that noble terrace the pier of Ramsgate, extending half a mile into the sea; all the ships, to and from the river, glide by us; and yesterday there was a magnificent *city* of them assembled in the Downs.

Your last two poems have excited a thirst in us after more from the same spring. Greatly do we need instruction on the subject of *conversation;* and you are the person to give it. You possess what is to be had from books, and, what is more, pass a good deal of time in circles where the art is practised in a perfection of which, in our hugger-mugger way of life, we have no idea. Turn the matter in your mind. It would go nicely in the didactic style of your friend Horace.

Mrs. Horne and my daughters desire to join their best compliments to the sisterhood, with those of,

Dear madam,
Your faithful and obedient servant,
GEORGE HORNE.

Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Cowslip Green, 1786.

The parson of my parish and his new-married wife (a musical Miss Wathen, who says she knows you) having offered to carry my letters to town, I am tempted to call myself to your remembrance by scrawling a few lines to you from my little rural habitation.

The day after that pleasant one we spent with you at Mr. Batt's, Mrs. Garrick carried me to Sandleford Priory, where I staid a week. I lived melodious days with Mrs. Montagu, the nightingales, and Spencer. We enjoyed ourselves prodigiously and were as enthusiastic and as foolish as we pleased.

Sandleford is amazingly improved; you would recant your former errors, which brought you into disgrace, could you see with what happiness Browne has beckoned the distant hills to come into prospect. His hand, with an art nobler than that of Mida, turns gold itself into beauty; and I had always a particular love for the talents of a man who could improve the taste of a country without impairing its virtue.

Will it be the smallest gratification to you to know that you were often wished for? Nor would you have disliked joining in the unrestrained freedom and safe indiscretion (which I hold to be one of the first comforts of real friendly communication) with which we talked *à tort et à travers*, where we could fear no censure, and courted no praise, for we had no auditors.

I have now been quietly set down a month in my little cottage; and the evil days are not yet come upon me wherein you barbarously prophesied that I should feel a joy to see even the apothecary ride up to the door; though it is certain I never *do* see him without thinking of you, by the aforesaid association. I did not express myself with much accuracy when I talked of living *quietly*; for in truth my neighbours are so kind, and so many people have brought themselves within that description that I had considered as without the limits, that I am very far from enjoying that perfect retreat which I had figured to myself, and which perhaps, though so vastly pretty in speculation, and so tempting in poetry, I should find burthensome enough if I were to reduce it to sober experiment.

I work in my garden all the morning, and ride in the evening through delicious lanes and hills, as pleasant as that on Mount Ephraim on which I met Mr. Rust. I read seldom, and write never, except now and then a letter to entitle myself to the comfort of hearing from the few I esteem and care for. My most serious studies have been a little book of Mrs. Trimmer's, that wise and pleasant friend of little children; it is, preposterously enough, called *Fabulous Histories;* which misled me into a notion that it was mythological; but I found it a most delectable History of a Robin Red-breast's nest, which I recommend to the younger part of your nursery. My friend William, I fancy, will be much above it, but it is delightful for little Mouse and me, and such readers; being quite as entertaining, and almost as true, as histories of graver names and more illustrious people.

I was in the very joy of my heart, on seeing the other day in the papers that our charming Miss Burney has got an estab-

lishment so near the queen. How I love the queen for having so wisely chosen!

I am sure Mrs. Pepys and you must have felt a great deal for poor Mr. Burrows: I know few private losses which will be more severely felt. I have met with few characters which took in a greater compass. His peculiar vein of wit, his truly original turn of thinking, his singular talent in education, and his uncommon felicity as an earnest and awakening preacher, all concurred to set his character in a very extraordinary point of view. I shall be vastly glad if you can give me any particulars of his death. I know nothing so interesting as the closing scenes of a champion of righteousness; there is one single fact that one may oppose to all the wit and argument of infidelity, that no man ever repented of Christianity on his death-bed. I grieve for the heavy blow this death will give to the feelings of our friend Mrs. Chapone; I doubt not but she is affectionately sharing the sorrows of the afflicted family.

Mrs. Boscawen just writes me that you have it in contemplation to go to the Isle of Wight. I have a notion it is a most delicious spot; but as I was never on it, I shall expect an animated picture of it from your pen.

Pray remember me very kindly to Mrs. Pepys.

I am, dear sir,

Your much obliged

HANNAH MORE.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Hampton, Dec. 26, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

Rumour, who, for want of nobler prey, now and then condescends to souse on such insignificant gibier as myself, may have told you that I passed through London in my way hither. As I staid in town only two days, I appeared only to two or three of our friends. I did not knock at your door, out of mere kindness to Mrs. Pepys, as I knew there was little chance of finding her, and great chance of her having the trouble of calling on us again, when I knew we should be flown. But I wished very much, and do still wish, to know, seriously, how you do, and if the Bath waters did their duty by you. I hear in *general* that you are *better*, but I wish to hear in *particular* that you are *well*.

I wish you had been here just now, to laugh with me at a very grave passage I met with in a book I have just laid down. It is an Eloge on the humility of the Virgin Mary, delivered at the Academie Française, by one of the Quarante. Mons. Tourreuil, after having apostrophized her in a way to make a sober Protestant smile, and described the transcendent exaltation she now enjoys in heaven, as a reward for her humility, goes on to *inform* her that her humility is still farther

rewarded by her having the honour of being made the subject for the prize of eloquence by the most enlightened academy in the world. Could any but a *Frenchman* have written thus? Nay, I question if any but a French *Academicien* could have written it. It would be impossible to find the most illiterate English curate who would seriously affirm that he thought it an additional exaltation of a saint in bliss, that the University of Oxford had given him as a subject for a prize poem.

Mrs. Garrick is well, and joins me in all manner of Christmas congratulations, and good wishes to Mrs. Pepys and yourself.

We depart instantly for Thames Ditton, where we are to spend a fortnight. We have been forced to cut off a piece from the beginning of this visit, from my having been confined with a great cold.

Do people write books now? I know nothing of the world or its ways. Yes; I *have* read Dr. Price's new Sermons; but that is a field too copious to enter upon at the end of a sheet of paper, when I have hardly room left for the name of your much obliged

H. More.

Mr. Pepys to Miss H. More.

Wimpole-street, December 31, 1786.

My good Friend,

I am really obliged to you for your kind inquiries after my health, which, thank God, has been perfectly re-established by the Bath waters. I was carried there from Oxford at the age of twenty-one, a martyr to (what I was then young enough to think a very meritorious) application to study; and by those admirable waters was *wound up* again for twenty years: at the expiration of which time I was obliged to return to them again: but then, alas! the winding up, though equally effectual at the time, would last only *six* years. How long the *third* will last God only knows; but I am deeply impressed with gratitude for His goodness in restoring me. Are you much impressed by days, times, and seasons? I cannot say that I am in general; but the return of *this* season never fails to make a very serious impression upon my mind, and to awaken in me the liveliest sensations of gratitude for having had such a profusion of blessings continued to me throughout the whole course of the year; "thou hast kept me, so that not a bone of me has been broken," never fails to occur to me in its literal sense, as matter of the greatest thanksgiving; but if extended to what a figurative sense of the expression might import, calls forth every exertion of our endeavours to show forth His praises to whom we are thus indebted, "not only with our lips, but in our lives." I make no apology for writing to you in this grave strain, as I know you feel with me.

Have you seen a very extraordinary production of some Eton boys? It is a periodical paper, called "The Microcosm," in one of which, for they are very unequal, the practice of common swearing is treated with a vein of ridicule not unworthy of Addison in his happiest mood. This is what I should have least expected from a boy. If he had jumbled together all the learning that he could collect from all the translations and compilations he could get, I should not have been much surprised; but elegant ridicule and well-supported ironical pleasantry are not often found at that age.

Pray give my best wishes to Mrs. Garrick. You have all, I conclude, had your laugh out against poor me for my fright about her house, which it seems turned out to be only a slight alarm at *Ucalagon's*, as Mr. Cambridge expressed it, by an allusion which might puzzle those who are not so familiar as you are with Virgil. I am afraid you are too comfortable to be expected soon in town; but do come as soon as you can, and in the mean time

Believe me yours,
W. W. PEPYS.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

*Thames Ditton,** 1786.

I hope you received the books safe, my dear madam. Mrs. Garrick presents her best respects, with many thanks for the *tableau*, which she read *d'un bout à l'autre*. As to the other, I confess I did not read it, it was so dull—the only fault I never expected to find in Rousseau. "Tous les genres sont bons hors le genre ennuyeux," says his sprightly enemy, and so think I. I am delighted that Florio has the good fortune to amuse you. I am trying to get him upon his feet (I do not mean that I ever expect him to *run*) before I come to London. I have attempted some alterations, which I hope have given a more dramatic form to the poem, and made it somewhat more pointed; but still my moments *à la derobée* are here so few, that I cannot give it the chiselling it wants. I have altered the title, as the other, I thought, raised false expectations, and was by no means the hinge on which the tale turns.

Mr. Pepys will have told you what violent opposition the Thames Ditton party make to the bringing this said Monsieur Florio into the world *clandestinely*. Mrs. Walsingham joins Mrs. Garrick and Mr. Pepys in insisting that he be brought into the world as the lawful issue of his mother. They also earnestly recommend my adding to this publication the "Bas Bleu," the copies of which are so multiplied that a mutilated one will probably steal into the world. Now, my dear madam, I assured them I should not stir a step in this business till I

* The seat of the Hon. Mrs. Walsingham, daughter of Lady Coningsby.

had your directions. I have argued the matter with them, but they seem decided. It breaks in on my little project of secrecy, but I am most afraid that you will think I am only writing to you to persuade me to do that which I had resolved to do without it. But I hope you know me better, and that I am not guilty of this affectation. I shall patiently wait for your opinion: you are my Court of Chancery, and your judgment is always decisive to, my dearest madam,

Your ever obliged and faithful

H. More.

If your sentence agree with the wishes of my friends here, I shall send the poems to Cadell, with orders to print immediately, while the town is as idle as Florio.

From Miss H. More to her sister.

London, March, 1787.

The first day I went out I had an invitation to Lady Amherst's, and another to *the Vesey*, to meet Mr. Smelt and Miss Burney. I deserted the peeress, and was rewarded for my democracy with a very pleasant and a *very little* party.

I have an anti-gallican anecdote for you. Just before Sir Joseph Yorke came home from Holland, he was at dinner one day at the Prince of Orange's, where was the Duc de Chartres: this latter behaved with his usual impoliteness, and took it into his head to ridicule the English ambassador. Finding that Sir Joseph did not laugh at any of his buffooneries, "Quoi, monsieur," said he, "est ce que vous ne riez jamais?"—"Rarement, monseigneur," replied Sir Joseph, with great coolness. Just at that time the combined French and Spanish fleets were in the British Channel—a new subject for the ill-breeding of the French prince. "Mais, monsieur," says he again, turning to Sir Joseph, "si notre flotte attacqueroit l'Angleterre?"—"Alors, monseigneur, je rirois," said Sir Joseph.

I have the pleasure to find Mr. Walpole remarkably well. Yesterday he sent me a very agreeable letter, with some very thick volumes of curious French memoirs, desiring me, if I liked them, to send for the other *twenty-three volumes*—a pretty light undertaking, in this mad town and this short life. I have just been requested to promote a subscription for poor Maty's widow, who is left in great distress; but what little I do I had rather do from my own purse than by applications. I must not remember that he disliked me, and did me whatever little ill turn he could in his review.

I have three or four invitations for every day; but I can only manage one dinner in one day. I passed an evening very pleasantly at the Bishop of Chester's, with an episcopal party,—among others the new Bishop of Lincoln; and since that I have visited Mrs. Pretyman, at their own house. Yesterday I dined with dear Mrs. Boscawen, and she carried me to drink

tea at Mrs. Delany's, where was Lady Bute, and the old noble party, all except its once greatest ornament, the ever to be regretted Duchess of Portland. We then went to Lady Charlotte Finch's, at St. James's, where we found a very agreeable and accomplished society of all the wise ladies of the age. I was at the Bishop of Salisbury's the other day, and I am invited to Mrs. Montagu's to-night, and Mrs. Walsingham's to-morrow, but have declined both.

From the same to the same.

London, March 31, 1787.

Well, I have got the "Paston Letters." As letters, they have very little merit. The style of composition at that time was barbarous enough; not a bit of the elegance of Rowley, the contemporary (if he ever existed) with the writers of these letters. To be sure they do throw a light on some obscure passages of history; and as they contain the news of the day at a time when there were no newspapers, they often serve to correct history. It is curious enough to see the great Earl of Warwick, the setter-up and puller-down of kings, writing to entreat a friend to lend him ten pounds. Margaret of Anjou appears better than the histories have made her.

I quite quarrel with Mrs. Ord, she does so extol Cowslip Green, that I am forced to lower it too much, to prevent all those who shall see it after her commendations from being disappointed. She gave Mr. Walpole so animated a description of it, that I believe he thinks it almost as fine as Strawberry Hill.

We had a very pleasant comical dinner the other day at Mrs. Cholmeley's. We were only nine females; every thing was very elegant; but we were as merry as if there had been no magnificence; and we all agreed that men were by no means so necessary as we had all been foolish enough to fancy. On Friday I was at a great dinner at Mrs. Montagu's. It was too numerous to be very agreeable, and we got off in the evening. We had a snug dinner last week at Lady Lyttleton's—only General Conway, Lady Aylesbury, and the Spanish ambassador, the Marquis del Campo, a giddy, merry mortal, with great animal spirits, and no very shining parts. He has none of the supercilious gravity of his country, and you would rather take him for a frothy Frenchman than a proud Castilian.

Tell Dr. Stonehouse I have seen Mrs. Gardiner. She is indeed a person of great excellence; her conversation is in heaven, whither she herself may be expected soon to go.

From the same to the same.

London, 1787.

I believe Patty will be a great fortune at last; for the ninth edition of my present to her, "The Search after Happiness," is

gone to the press. I am really shocked at the public taste, which has taken off ten thousand copies of a poem which I have not patience to read.

One day last week I met at dinner Mrs. Siddons; she is a very fine woman; I never saw her before. I spent yesterday a sober quiet day at Lady Amherst's, and read Shakspeare to my lord till eleven o'clock at night. Lady Amherst has great credit in the education of her young folks. I have had a long visit from Mrs. Trimmer. Her appearance, behaviour, and conversation are full of good sense and propriety. I hear that Brentford exhibits a visible change of manners in consequence of her labours. She is the author whom I venture most to recommend. I made one lady take three dozen of her books yesterday. I presumed to give her a great deal of good wholesome advice about booksellers; for, would you believe it, popular as I am persuaded she must be, she has got little or nothing by her writings except reputation and the consciousness of doing good; two things on which though I set all due value, yet where there are ten children, money must have the eleventh place in maternal consultation.

I breakfasted on Sunday and Good-Friday with the Bishop of Chester, who afterward carried me to hear him preach, both times to my great delectation. Gibbon comes over in June, with three quarto volumes more of his "Decline and Fall." I have seen a letter from him, in which he says, "these three volumes are somewhat slenderer, but not less laboured, than their elder brothers." Nor are they, I dare say, more free from the leaven of infidelity which pervades every part of his works. I have been reading a new answer to him by Sir David Dalrymple, very acute and well-mannered. He manages the sly philosopher with great dexterity, and in a way which is likely to affect a man of Gibbon's cool temper more than the rough blows and hard words of some of his other opponents.

I was the other day at Mrs. Delany's, who is quite recovered after nine weeks' dangerous illness. What a marvel at eighty-seven! My pretty friend Miss Cholmeley is going to be married to Lord Mulgrave: seventeen and forty-seven is a little disparity, but it is her own choice, though she has beauty and fortune. I hope Mrs. Kennicott will take a trip to Cowslip Green while she stays at Bristol.

I dined yesterday at Mrs. Montagu's. Mr. Pepys and I made an assignation for a quiet chat this evening at Mrs. Chapone's, where we three spent the pleasantest two or three hours imaginable. We all regretted that we do not get a great many more such, instead of wasting our time in great and promiscuous parties, where there can be little intercourse of mind or sentiment. For this snug party I refused one of the finest assemblies in London, which I knew would be very grand and very dull.

Mr. Pepys told me he had a great struggle whether to come to us or to go to Percy. At last he concluded to give up the child for the sake of the mother. They were astonished at my not being there. I told them, as I had been able to resist Shakspeare so many years, there was no great philosophy in withstanding the poet of that night. The next day I had another attack. I dined with Sir Joshua, Mr. Burke, and two or three others of that stamp. They cried all at once, "Were you not delighted with Mrs. Siddons last night in Percy?" I replied, "No; for I did not see her." They would not believe me guilty of such insensibility, adding, "She did it exquisitely, as the tears of Mr. Fox, who sat with us, testified."

To-day (Tuesday) I have been in the city to hear good Mr. Newton preach; and afterward went and sat an hour with him, and came home with two pockets full of sermons.

From the same to the same.

Hampton, 1787.

We are come to Hampton for a couple of days, to dissipate colds and gather violets. I never saw them in such perfection at this time of the year: every flower and shrub makes me long to see those in my own dear garden, which, I think, when the apple-trees come to blow, must be in high beauty. I want to know if the new limes at the entrance prosper. We are going back to London as soon as we have dined, to be witnesses of its follies and vanities. I was invited last Sunday to Lady Charlotte Finch's, to meet the Duchess-dowager of Beaufort, who is pleased to say she has been seeking to be acquainted with me these two years: but it being the day when those who fear their creditors go abroad, and those who fear God stay at home, I was deaf to the honour. I was at Lady Amherst's magnificent assembly last week: dull and foolish as assemblies are, yet it is diverting to see them once or twice in a year. A noble suit of rooms, filled with four hundred persons of the first rank, dressed in all the vanity which the present fantastic fashions allow: but, alas! the eye is soon satisfied with seeing, and the ear has nothing to hear worth hearing. The Duke and Duchess of Cumberland came early, but the Prince of Wales did not arrive till near midnight. He was, as usual, all gayety and gracefulness. He did me the honour to ask for me, and to tell me that he had often wished to see me.

You must tell the young ladies that they must now exercise their wit in making synonymes, and *contes folles;* these are the two exercises of all the *beaux esprits* at Paris. The latter are stories in which are introduced dialogues between mad people, a sort of random nonsense, in which, as Polonius says, "though it is madness, there must be method in it." The synonymes are of a graver cast, and require a great deal of thought and

discrimination. You must take two words which convey something of the same idea, but which, on defining them, will appear to be very different; such as *franchise, verité, calomnie, médisance;* and then see how many ingenious things you can produce in contrasting them with each other.

To the same.

London, 1787.

We have been at Hampton for some days, to my great joy. It has much abated my headaches. I had yesterday invitations to dine at the Bishop of Salisbury's and Lord Bathurst's: but was engaged to Mr. Brooksbank, where were all the corps diplomatique, none of whom I thought pleasant but Sir Joseph Yorke, our thirty years' ambassador to Holland.

We had so fine a show of literati on Saturday at Lady Herries's, that somebody was saucy enough to say, that they pitied all other parties that evening, as ours seemed to have monopolized all the wit and learning. A card party would have thought us much greater objects of pity. I was at Mr. Cole's* the other evening, where were the Bishops of Chester and Peterborough, Soame Jenyns, Mr. Charles Yorke, Arthur Young, and many others. I tormented Mr. Symons, who succeeded the poet Gray as History Professor at Cambridge, to tell me all about Calabria and Sicily, which he has visited with such a classic spirit as to make his accounts very pleasing. He is a very good-natured and modest man, and very kind and friendly to me.

John Home, the Scotch poet, breakfasted here yesterday. Douglas writes no more, but has hung up his harp as well as Percy. It is time for us both to take our leave of poetry. A friend of mine, just come from Paris, told me a story of one of the *notables*. He was a provincial gentleman, of very good sense and learning, but whose coat was not of the newest Paris cut. He was sitting at dinner between two *petits maîtres* of the first water, who agreed to roast the countryman; and accordingly began to assail him with the most impertinent curiosity. After patiently bearing their ill-breeding, he said to them, "Gentlemen, I will gratify your desire to be acquainted with my character, *hé bien! donc; le voici, je suis ni sot, ni fat, mais je suis autre les deux.*" This repartee procured him good treatment the rest of the dinner.

To the same.

London, April, 1787.

We have been a whole week at Hampton, which I spent in strolling and reading. I enjoyed it prodigiously, and returned

* A learned lawyer, at whose house she used to meet very select society.

quite well; poor Mrs. Wilmot was with us, and made it very pleasant. She is so famous a reader of Shakspeare and Spencer, that we were quite poetical and pastoral. I spent a day at Lady Aylesbury's; in the evening there was a concert. It was quite *le temple des beaux arts*. Lady A. works portraits as Raphael paints them; and there was Mrs. Damer, to remind us of her famous dogs of exquisite sculpture. There was my Lord Derby, to talk about his company of Richmond House comedians (you know Lady Aylesbury is the Duchess of Richmond's mother); Lord Abingdon, and his band of musicians,—for it was he who gave us the concert, in which he was the principal performer; and there was General Conway, poet to the ducal theatre. It would have made some of the old nobility stare, to have seen so many great personages descended from them, degenerated (as their noble pride would have called it) into geniuses, actors, artists, and poets. *Real* talent, however, never degrades.

I am just returned from an exhibition of pictures, among others, the famous one of St. Ambrose expelling the Emperor Theodosius from the church, for which 2000*l.* has been refused; I assure you it was not *I* that offered it.

I have had the fortitude to resist the most obliging invitations into Kent, from Mrs. Bouverie, the Bishop of Chester, and Lady Amherst; the latter I could only get off from by promising to visit her another year, at her fine place at Montreal; so named from my lord's conquest of that place, and where the sovereigns have been guests. But I could tell them that the attractions of my thatched cottage are more irresistible than all their splendour. I must except the bishop's indeed, whose sweet little parsonage at Hunton has none of the dulness of magnificence, but is small enough for ease and enjoyment, especially with such a master and mistress as it boasts.

From Mrs. Trimmer to Miss H. More.

May 10, 1787.

DEAR MADAM,

I feel myself inexpressibly obliged by your kind attention. It would appear like flattery to say how much I value your good opinion, but indeed it has long been the secret wish of my heart to obtain it. Your kind mention of my works to the Bishop of Salisbury* I esteem a high obligation. I cannot but be proud of his approbation, though I must consider it as a proof of his regard to religion, which induces him to countenance any attempt, however feeble, to promote its interests. I could wish you, dear madam, to assure his lordship that his kind notice gives fresh animation to my zeal, and that I shall be highly gratified if he does me the honour of calling on me.

* Dr. Barrington, afterward Bishop of Durham.

I have been favoured with a most friendly letter from Dr. Stonehouse, and a present of all his Tracts, &c. My best thanks are due to you, madam, for the obliging representations which have procured me the notice of this venerable gentleman, who would otherwise have overlooked me and my humble performances. I need not say that it is a great satisfaction to me to be regarded in so favourable a light by the good and the wise; for you have had such full experience of this kind of pleasure, that you can easily conceive what I enjoy from this circumstance.

When I see new editions of your publications advertised, I sincerely rejoice that there is so much taste remaining in the world. I hope your useful pen does not lie idle. Surely you mean to favour the public with something more shortly. I have long been in hopes of seeing another volume of "Sacred Dramas." Indeed, my dear madam, you should go on with them; they are so extremely engaging to young minds, and the sentiments so agreeable to Scripture, that they cannot fail of producing the happiest effects. You know that I read the sacred volume frequently; I may truly say it is my highest *entertainment* to do so, and I can assure you that your "Sacred Dramas" excite in my mind the same kind of *devotional* feeling as the Scriptures themselves.

I avail myself of your kind permission to submit the beginning of my new edition of "Sacred History" to your inspection, and should esteem myself greatly obliged if you would favour me with your sincere opinion whether I have improved upon the former one or not. I send with it a specimen of the Psalms, which I mentioned when I had the pleasure of seeing you. I believe I must endeavour to do them in a more concise way for Sunday-schools; but at present the revision of "Sacred History" employs all my time.

In conformity with your friendly counsel, I wrote to my publisher, about three weeks ago, desiring that he would settle my account in the course of this month, which he has *promised* to do without fail. At present I am a mere bookseller's fag, but hope to have resolution enough to disentangle myself.

When, my dear madam, may I hope for the favour of your company? I long to introduce my family to you; they are impatient to see a lady whose character and writings they so highly esteem. I wish to show you the spinning-wheel; it is really a most interesting sight to see twelve little girls so usefully and so agreeably employed. I shall experience so great a disappointment if I should chance to be out when you come, that I hope you will be able to fix the time. I cannot be satisfied with a mere *call*—surely you can spare me a day. I have a bed at your service, if you can be prevailed on to accept it.

I was very sorry that I had not the honour of seeing Dr. Stonehouse's daughter, who was so obliging as to leave the

parcel for me. I beg you will present my best compliments when you see her. I shall write to the doctor to-day.

My daughters desire to be respectfully remembered to you; and I am, dear madam,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

S. TRIMMER.

From the Rev. J. Newton to Miss H. More.

Coleman-street Buildings, May 11, 1787.

MY DEAR MADAM,

A familiar style of address, you may say, upon so short an acquaintance; but may I not use it by anticipation? Thus, at this season of the year, we speak of a field of wheat, because, though there may be some Londoners who, from its green appearance, would pronounce it to be mere grass, we expect that it will produce ears of wheat before the harvest arrives. So, from yesterday's specimen, Mrs. Newton and I judge that if you and we were so situated as that our present slight acquaintance could be cultivated by frequent interviews, you would soon be very dear to us. And even now, from what I have seen, superadded to what I have read and heard, my heart will not allow me to make a serious apology for taking the liberty to say—My dear Madam.

This waits upon you to thank you for your obliging call—to request your acceptance of the Fast Sermon—and to express my best wishes for your welfare, and to assure you that I am, with great sincerity,

Your affectionate and obliged servant,

JOHN NEWTON.

P.S.—I wrote a preface to the first volume of Cowper's Poems. His name was not then known among the booksellers, and they were afraid to bind up my preface with the book, lest it should operate like a death's-head at a feast, and, by its gravity, hinder the sale it was designed to recommend: but I am not afraid to send *you* a copy.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Newton.

Adelphi, May 18, 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,

You see I adopt your friendly mode of address; and, I trust, with an equal degree of cordiality. Whenever I know any thing of a person's character and disposition beforehand, if it be of a meritorious kind, and especially if I have read and liked his writings, it saves me a great deal of trouble; for it cuts off all the long preliminaries of mere acquaintance, and I at once feel that degree of friendship for them which in other cases one does not arrive at but after much time and by slow gradations.

I should immediately have thanked you for your very acceptable present of books and pamphlets; but that I have been in hope, from day to day, of being able to wait on you with my personal thanks. As every morning has brought its hope, so every day has brought its disappointment; and as I am now on the point of leaving town, I see very little chance of being able to indulge myself in a way I should like so well. I will not, therefore, any longer incur the censure of ingratitude by delaying to thank you for your kind attention to me. Your little book to your dissenting friend I opened the moment I came home, intending (for I was very busy) only to read a page or two; but I was so pleased with the candour, good sense, and Christian spirit of it, that I never laid it out of my hands while there was a page unread. I regret that your ideal academy cannot be realized. The large volume I leave unbroached for my country retirement, and expect to receive much profit and pleasure from it.

How could I write so much without saying a word of Mrs. Newton? Only, I suppose, because one generally saves the best for the last. Pray tell her, with my kind compliments, that I regret exceedingly the inconvenient distance between us, which puts it out of my power to cultivate an intimacy from which I am persuaded I should derive so much pleasure and advantage.

I heartily wish you all the comforts and blessings of this world, and in the next the high reward promised to those who turn many to righteousness.

I am, dear sir,
With much regard, your obliged and faithful
humble servant,
H. More.

From the same to the same.

Adelphi, May 31, 1787

My dear Sir,

Many thanks for your very kind letter, and the affectionate interest you are so good to take in my welfare. It is worth while to be a little sick, were it only to try the kindness of one's friends. I have had a good deal of fever, which is now, I thank God, much abated, though my cough remains; but as I am going out of town almost immediately, I trust that the pure air and quiet of the country will be of service. I am sometimes inwardly rejoiced when a slight indisposition furnishes me with a lawful pretence for not keeping a visiting engagement; but this was far from being the case on Friday last, when I had figured to myself that I should derive not only pleasure, but profit, from the society I should have found there. But you have said so many consolatory things upon the subject, and have put me in the way of drawing so much good out of these

little accidental evils, that I hope I shall be the better, not only from this disappointment, but also from many future ones, for some of the hints you have suggested.

I am thoroughly persuaded of the necessity of seeing and acknowledging the hand of Providence in the smaller as well as in the greater events of life; but I want more of the *practical* persuasion of this great truth. Pray for me, my good sir, that I may be enabled to obtain more firmness of mind, a more submissive spirit, and more preparedness, not only for death itself, but for the common evils of life.

I shall look forward with pleasure to the hope of seeing you in my little thatched hermitage during the summer, and am, very truly,

My dear sir,
Your much obliged and sincere friend,
H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

If I were in the *Palace of Truth*, I should say, dear Mrs. Kennicott, how can you be so stupid as to mistake the meaning of my note, plain and perspicuous as it was? for I value myself on the clearness of my sense, which it would have been impossible for you not to have understood if you have common understanding. But, dating from Hampton, I am compelled in courtesy to say, my dear Mrs. Kennicott, I am vastly sorry my stupidity should have given you so much trouble. I am sure I must have expressed myself very ambiguously; the fault I am most apt to commit. I often lament the want of perspicuity in my expressions; but if all my readers had your sagacity and penetration, it would less magnify.

Now, which manner do you like best, obliging lies or offensive truth? Lying for ever, I say! It is agreeable to wicked nature, and soothing to self-love. What a pretty opinion any one who did not know our meaning would have of my morals! The above declaration, too, comes with peculiar propriety from me, who have just been reading Fenelon on the beauty of truth. I love to show how I improve by my reading.

I was just going to put an end to this moral and entertaining letter, without mentioning a word of the business for which I wrote it; which, to indulge you with another digression, puts me in mind of Dr. Woodward's sitting three hours with me when I was sick, and after taking leave, coming up stairs to ask how I did; a question he had neglected during his visit. It made a fine laugh. But to return to the carpet. I was here under violent temptation to make a pun; but my prudence got the better of my wit: do not think it was because my wit was weak, but because my prudence was strong. I have a great tenderness for a bad pun that is *spoken;* but a *written* bad pun! that indeed is a very serious evil.

Oh, but I forget; Mrs. G. consented I should give you the hint about the carpet, to save your delicacy any contest with Mr. Moore. She hopes you will excuse the freedom; but she thought the first a shabby present, as she intended it should have amounted to the price of both. She says they are not worth thanks, and begs you will think so too. Best compliments to the provost, Mrs. R., and my friend Miss R., if she is with you.

I am, my dear friend,
Affectionately yours,
H. More.

From Miss H. More to her sister.

London, June, 1787.

The Duchess-dowager of Beaufort asked me a great many questions about Cowslip Green, when I met her lately at Lady Juliana Penn's, where was a large party, all of noble ladies except my plebeian self. I dined on Friday at the Bishop of Salisbury's, and had the honour of meeting yesterday his grace of Canterbury and an episcopal group, at the Bishop of Chester's. So, for a person who has long protested against going out any more, I keep it up pretty well; but am joyful to say that my last moments are at hand. I close my London life by dining at Mr. Batt's on Friday. On the 8th I propose to set off at five in the morning, and stay with Dr. Stonehouse till the 11th. Mrs. Boscawen wrung from me my slow consent to sit for my picture to Opie: I would not have done it for anybody else.

CHAPTER III.

In the month of June in this year, Miss H. More returned to Cowslip Green; and during the summer and autumn of the same year the following letters passed between her and her friends, particularly Mr. Horace Walpole (afterward Earl of Orford).

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Carter.

Cowslip Green, 1787.

My dearest Mrs. Carter,

I left London the 9th of June, after dining the last day at my neighbour's, Mrs. Batt's, with your friend and admirer Mr. Hawkins Browne, Mr. Pepys, and the two Cambridges, where

we talked down, not only the sun, but the moon also. I journeyed on to Bristol, near which I met an object which engaged my tenderest affections in a painful manner: it was the funeral procession, all decked with milk-white plumes, of the now angel daughter of your friend, Lady Cremorne. Poor Lord and Lady Cremorne! I hear they bear this last blow with noble resignation.

You will easily imagine my regret to learn, at my return, that I had spent some time at the Castle at Marlborough when poor Lady Harriet C—— was actually in the house, engaged in the sad duty of attending her dying son. O, if I had suspected it! That excellent family has lately had many hard trials: may they be sanctified to them!

I had the satisfaction to find my little garden very flourishing; very few shrubs dead, the flowers multiplied beyond my hope, and the turf of a little spot (which I am afraid we are magnificent enough to call a lawn) of a verdure uncommonly bright. I am sorry to owe the beauty of my vegetation to such incessant and violent rains as have, I fear, half-ruined the poor farmers in my neighbourhood.

I live so much out of the world, that not a newspaper brings me the history of what passes in it; and the Princess of Orange had been run away with, Miss Cholmeley married, Mr. Gambier dead, and the little Montagu born, weeks before I ever heard that such events had taken place.

I am sure you rejoice with me on the removal of our excellent friend to the see of London,—a station in which his hands will be so much strengthened, and his power of doing good so widely extended. I rejoice for many reasons, but for none more than that his ecclesiastical jurisdiction, extending to the West Indies, will make him of infinite usefulness in the great object I have so much at heart,—the project to abolish the slave-trade in Africa. This most important cause has very much occupied my thoughts this summer; the young gentleman* who has embarked in it with the zeal of an apostle has been much with me, and engaged all my little interest, and all my affections in it. It is to be brought before parliament in the spring. Above one hundred members have promised their votes. My dear friend, be sure to canvass everybody who has a heart. It is a subject too ample for a letter, and I shall have a great deal to say to you on it when we meet. To my feelings, it is the most interesting subject which was ever discussed in the annals of humanity. When you come to town, I will send you the heads of it.

I am delighted with an old book, but new to me, which I have lately met with, "Smith's Discourses."† Some of them

* Mr. Wilberforce.

† John Smith, of Queen's College, Cambridge.

are too metaphysical for me, but all are full of sterling sense and evangelical piety.

Adieu, my most excellent friend,

Yours, most faithfully,

HANNAH MORE.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Walpole.

Cowslip Green, June, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

It is no encouragement to be good, when it is so profitable to do evil: and I shall grow wicked upon principle, and ungrateful by system. If I thought that not answering one letter would always procure me two such, I would be as silent as ingratitude, bad taste, and an unfeeling heart can cause the most undeserving to be. I did, indeed, receive your first obliging letter, and intended, in the true spirit of a Bristol trader, to send you some of my worthless beads and bits of glass, in exchange for your ivory and gold-dust, but a very tedious nervous headache has made me less than ever qualified to traffic with you in this dishonest way, and I have been so little accustomed to connect your idea with that of pain and uneasiness, that I know not how to set about the strange association; but I am now better, and would not have named being sick at all, if there were any other apology in the world that would have justified my not writing. Mrs. Carter and I have a thousand times agreed that your wit was by no means the cause of our esteem for you: because you cannot *help* having it if you would; and I never in my life could be attached to any one for their wit, if wit was the best thing they had. It is an established maxim with me, that the truest objects of warm attachment are the small parts of great characters. I never considered the patriotic Brutus with any delight as the assertor of freedom, and as "refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate;" no, it is the gentle, compassionate Brutus that engages my affection, who refused to disturb the slumbers of the poor boy who attended him in that anxious night, when he destroyed himself, and so much needed his services. So when I sit in a little hermitage I have built in my garden, *not to be melancholy in*, but to think upon my friends, and to read their works—and their letters, Mr. Walpole seldomer presents himself to my mind as the man of wit than as the tender-hearted and humane friend of my dear, infirm, broken-spirited Mrs. Vesey. One only admires talents, and admiration is a cold sentiment, with which affection has commonly nothing to do; but one does more than admire them when they are devoted to such gentle purposes. My very heart is softened when I consider that she is now out of the way of your kind attentions, and I fear that nothing else on earth gives her the smallest pleasure. But I shall make you sad, and myself too, if I talk

any longer in this strain, for I do love her with a tender affection, and cannot but take a warm interest in every thing that is either useful or pleasant to her. Even in this affecting decay of her sweet mind, her heart retains all its unimpaired amiableness. Her purity rather resembles that innocence which is the ignorance of evil, than that virtue which is the conquest over it. But I am running on just as if you did not know and love her as well as I do; I hope she is gone to Tunbridge, which will amuse her a little, though it can do her no good.

I am become a perfect outlaw from all civil society and orderly life. I spend almost my whole time in my little garden, which "mocks my scant manuring." From "morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve," I am employed in raising dejected pinks, and reforming disorderly honeysuckles.

Yours, dear sir, very faithfully,

H. M.

From Mr. H. Walpole to Miss H. More.

Strawberry Hill, June 15, 1787.

In your note, on going out of town, you desired me to remember you; but as I do not like the mere servile merit of obedience, I took time, my dear madam, to try to forget you; and having failed as to my wish, I have the free-born pleasure of thinking of you in spite of my teeth, and without any regard to your injunction. No queen upon earth, as fond as royal persons are of their prerogative, but would prefer being loved for herself rather than for her power; and I hope you have not more majesty

"Than a whole race of queens."

Perhaps the spirit of your command did not mean that I should give you such manual proof of my remembrance, and you may not know what to make of a subject that avows a mutinous spirit, and at the same time exceeds the measure of his duty. It is, I own, a kind of Irish loyalty; and, to keep up the Irish character, I will confess that I never was disposed to be so loyal to any sovereign that was not a subject. If you collect from all this galimatas that I am cordially your humble servant, I shall be content. The Irish have the best hearts in the three kingdoms, and they never blunder more than when they attempt to express their zeal and affections; the reason, I suppose, is, that cool sense never thinks of attempting impossibilities; but a warm heart feels itself ready to do more than is possible for those it loves. I am sure our poor friend in Clarges-street would subscribe to this last sentence. What English heart ever excelled hers? I should almost have said equalled, if I were not writing to one that rivals her.

The last time I saw her before I left London, Miss Burney

passed the evening there, looking quite recovered and well, and so cheerful and agreeable, that the court seems only to have improved the ease of her manner, instead of stamping more reserve on it, as I feared; but what slight graces it can give will not compensate to us and the world for the loss of her company and her writings—not but *some young ladies* who can write can stifle their talent as much as if they were under lock and key in the royal library. I do not see but a *cottage* is as pernicious to genius as the queen's waiting-room. Why should one *remember* people that forget themselves? Oh! I am sorry I used that expression, as it is commonly applied to such self-oblivion as Mrs. ——, and light and darkness are not more opposite than the forgetfulness to which I alluded and hers. The former forgetfulness can forget its own powers and the injuries of others; the latter can forget its own defects and the obligations and services it has received. How poor is language that has not distinct terms for modesty and virtue, and for excess of vanity and ingratitude! The Arabic tongue, I suppose, has specific words for all the shades of oblivion, which, you see, has its extremes. I think I have heard that there are some score of different terms for a lion in Arabic, each expressive of a different quality, and consequently its generosity and its appetite for blood are not confounded in one general word. But if an Arabian vocabulary were as numerous in proportion for all the qualities that can enter into a human composition, it would be more difficult to be learned therein than to master all the characters of the Chinese.

You did me the honour of asking me for my "Castle of Otranto" for your library at Cowslip Green. May I, as a printer, rather than as an author, beg leave to furnish part of a shelf there? and as I must fetch some of the books from Strawberry Hill, will you wait till I can send them all together? And will you be so good as to tell me whither I shall send them, or how direct and convey them to you at Bristol? I shall have a satisfaction in thinking that they will remain in your rising cottage (in which, I hope, you will enjoy a long series of happy hours), and that they will sometimes, when they and I shall be forgotten in other places, recall to Miss More's memory

Her very sincere humble servant,
H. WALPOLE.

From H. More to Mr. Walpole.

Cowslip Green, July, 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have just been thinking that if the amorous poet who modestly wished to annihilate time and space had lived to see our fortunate days, he would have seen his prophetic visions

realized—cards having well-nigh accomplished the first, and mail-coaches the last. Is it not a little hard that I alone should live in so uncivilized a nook of the island, where neither of these delights have reached? For the first of them, however, I can pretty well furnish a substitute, by destroying my time most effectually with such elegant arts as weeding and *piping*. Do not fancy, dear sir, that I mean such sort of piping as I have heard scholars say Virgil and Theocritus enchanted their fellow-swains with; no, I mean that more useful art which best effects the propagation of pinks and carnations, and which Flora holds among her most mysterious rites. Of the other blessing, the annihilation of space, I cannot partake; mail-coaches, which come to others, come not to me. Letters and newspapers, now that they travel in coaches like gentlemen and ladies, come not within ten miles of my hermitage. And while other fortunate provincials are studying the *world* and its ways, and are feasting upon elopements, divorces, and suicides, tricked out in all the elegancies of Mr. Topham's phraseology, I am obliged to be contented with village vices, petty iniquities, and vulgar sins; yet I comfort myself, that however my mind stands still in this dearth of information, my English will get less corrupted by the gross dialect of my fellow day-labourers, the *Zummersetshire* clowns, than by the elegant periods and sublimated nonsense of the aforesaid Mr. Topham.

You will allow, sir, that one must be terribly at leisure to write all this nonsense; but it would be decent in me to consider, that however I, the writer, may be idle and dissipated, you, the reader, have a thousand demands upon your time; and that perhaps every moment in which I am engaging your attention, I am sinning, not against the public convenience indeed, for you are no politician, but the public pleasure and delight. I could not, however, for any consideration, public or private, resist the inclination I felt to thank you for the kind present of your picture, and to inquire how you do: a question I do not ask in words of course, but as one in which I have an interest, for you were not quite well when I left town. For my own part I deserve more laurels than this dry summer has left in my garden, for the heroic sacrifice I made in quitting London the day I did. I actually returned a ticket for hearing Sheridan's peroration at the impeachment, at my full ease, in the best situation. I had no merit in resisting Mrs. Walsingham's fête, nor General Conway's play, for I should have gone to neither. I came home for the poor-spirited reason of keeping my word with my country friends. I defy history and fable, and Mr. Haley's "Triumphs of Temper" into the bargain, to match such instances of self-denial; and yet, such is the envy and malice of mankind, I question if either poet will sing or biographer record it; and so it must die among those quiet virtues which are not paid

in fame, though they cost more than those that are. Very often do I think with true and tender sorrow of poor dear Mrs. Vesey, or rather Mrs. Handcock, for to her is all one's feeling now due. What does she do now that she has neither you nor Mrs. Carter to brighten the sad moments? Hers I am sure are, seriously, the quiet virtues which will be remembered somewhere.

Yours, dear sir,
Most truly,
H. M.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Walpole.

Cowslip Green, 1787.

I take no small credit, dear sir, in having so long denied myself the great satisfaction of thanking you for the favour of your letter. I hope you see all the merit of this abstinence, and will pay me back in reputation all that I lose in pleasure. I confess, however, that there is more discretion than generosity in not having abused the power I possessed of giving you trouble. For I consider, that by not forcing myself into your presence *contré vent et marée*, I shall be received with more complacency when I do appear to you, and shall not compel you continually to associate my name with the ideas of impertinence and torment; besides, you scolded me so heartily, that I should have been frightened if my self-love, the most ingenious and tender friend I have, and which constantly turns every thing to my own account, had not suggested to me that I always used to consider your finding fault with me as a mark of favour, and that when you were very civil to me, I was always ransacking my memory to see if I had not done something wrong.

Your account of dear Mrs. Vesey's affecting situation struck upon my very heart: I never think of her but with sorrow, because hers is a distress which leaves one nothing to hope: it is terrible that the only clear idea she has left is a keen sense of all she has lost.

Mrs. Carter, who writes me that she has just seen Major Vesey, confirms your sad report; but as she is of a more hoping spirit than I am, she still flatters herself that the winter, which will bring Mrs. Vesey's friends about her, will restore her to some degree of cheerfulness. Tell her, if you please, when you see her, that I have had the pleasure of seeing a good deal of her amiable niece, Lady de Vesci, who has visited this cottage; she is a sweet woman, gentle in her mind and manners, very pretty, and very accomplished. What a blessing for Mrs. Vesey that Mrs. Handcock is alive and well! I do venerate that woman beyond words: her faithful, quiet, patient attachment make all showy qualities and shining talents appear little in my eyes. There is so little

parade in her kindness, that I believe she herself never suspects she is making a sacrifice. Such characters are what Mr. Burke calls the "soft quiet green on which the soul loves to rest."

As a contrast to the above, I must produce my old friend the milkwoman. She has just brought out another new book, which you may possess for five shillings, and which she has advertised to be quite free from *my* corruptions. What is curious, she has prefixed to it my original preface to her first book, and twenty pages of the scurrility published against me in her second. To all this she has added the deed which I got drawn by an eminent lawyer, to secure her money in the funds, and which, she asserts, I made Mrs. Montagu sign without reading.

Do, dear sir, join me in sincere compassion, without one atom of resentment (for that I solemnly protest is the state of my mind towards her), for a human heart of such unaccountable depravity as to harbour such deep malice for two years, though she has gained her point, and the money is settled to her wish. If I wanted to punish an enemy, it should be by fastening on him the trouble of constantly hating somebody.

I am with great truth,

Dear sir, ever yours,

H. More.

From H. More to her sister.

Adelphi, 1787.

Lady Middleton came here as soon as she heard I was arrived, and I spent the same evening with her in Hertford-street. I heard from both Sir Charles and Mr. Morton Pitt, that Mr. Wilberforce had told the House he should bring in a bill, after the holydays, for the abolition of the slave-trade. Mr. Fox went up to him, and told him he should heartily concur with him in that measure; that he had thoughts of bringing in such a bill himself, but was very glad it was in so much better hands.

I found an invitation from Mrs. Wilmot, to spend the Christmas at Farnborough place, but I am already disposed of.

On Saturday we dined at Mrs. Montagu's in a snug family way, and had a great deal of pleasant talk. Her health and spirits are in perfection. I hope I have engaged her heartily in the interest of the blacks.

Yesterday I dined and spent the whole day with the Middletons. It was given up entirely to negro business, and all other company was excluded. I enclose Mr. Ramsay's pointed and most sensible pamphlet, and let all the flesh and blood merchants in the world answer it if they can.

From Bishop Porteus to Miss H. More.

1787.

DEAR MADAM,

On my return home yesterday, I was greatly mortified when I understood that I had lost the pleasure of seeing you and our friends from Hertford-street. I have been daily punished for giving way to fashion, and setting out upon a round of ceremonious visits: some of them, too, I confess, to very good sort of people, whom perhaps I shall never find at home: so I have been punished by missing those whom I wished most to see. I was, however, a little consoled to find that you had left a blessing behind you; for so in truth I deem your little book to be.* I was charmed and edified with it, and am impatient to see it in the hands of every man and woman of condition in London and Westminster. The errata are not certainly numerous or important enough to delay the publication a moment. They may be easily corrected in all the copies with the pen. The motto might be added in the same manner, or printed on a little scrap of paper and pasted on, or a new title-page might be printed in a few hours, if you thought it worth while. Were I to make any cavil, it would be to doubt whether the criminality of negative compared with positive sin is not expressed a little too strongly in pages 68 and 69. But this I say *currente calamo*, and without sufficient time for consideration. Upon the whole, I must say it is a most delicious morsel, and I almost envy you the good that it will do. It will be an excellent precursor to our society, and do half its business beforehand.

I am delighted to hear that your poetry will so soon follow your prose. If it be equally good in its kind, I desire nothing more. You have given me a keen appetite for it, I assure you; and I am such an epicure, that though I have feasted sumptuously on the first course, I wait with eagerness for the delicacies of the second.

Your illness gave us all the truest concern. Pray take care of your health for the sake of the public and your friends. For where, now that Soame Jenyns is gone, can we find any one but yourself that can make the "fashionable world" read books of morality and religion, and find improvement when they are only looking for amusement?

I am, dear madam,
With great esteem,
Your most faithful and obedient servant,
B. LONDON.

* "Thoughts on the Manners of the Great."

From the Rev. John Newton to Miss H. More.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I longed to hear from you, or to see you, and because my longing proved of such long continuance, I feared you continued ill. Your late kind note gratified my wishes, and relieved my apprehensions; and from the hour I received it, I have been watching for an interval of leisure to thank you for it.

Your poem was soon followed by a little book, addressed to the great. In the blank leaf there was written, "from the author." As to the rest, I was for a time in suspense, but I believe the prevalence of public reports will now authorize me to thank you for it. I wish I had it before me, but when I had read it rather hastily over, one borrowed it, and then another, and it is still travelling about among my friends. I congratulate you on the performance, and especially on your choice of a subject. You could easily write what would procure you more general applause; but it is a singular privilege to have a *consecrated* pen, and to be able and willing to devote our talents to the cause of God and religion. There are no persons whom I more compassionate, or of whom I am more afraid, than some of those whom you so well describe, under the character of good sort of people. I am often reminded of a hard-named figure, called, I think, an antiperistasis, the force of which is well illustrated when we say the fire burns most fiercely in frosty weather. If I am lawfully called into the company of the profligate, I am too much shocked to be in great danger of being hurt by them. I feel myself in the situation of the traveller when assaulted by the north wind. The vehemence of the wind makes me wrap my cloak the faster about me. But when I am with your good sort of people, I am like the same traveller when under the powerful beams of the sun; the insinuating warmth puts me insensibly off my guard, and I am in danger of voluntarily dropping the cloak, which could not be forced from me by downright violence. The circle of politeness, elegance, and taste, unless a higher spirit and principle predominate, is to me an enchanted spot, which I seldom enter without fear, and seldom retire from without loss.

My account of the slave-trade has the merit of being true. I am not afraid of being solidly contradicted by any or by all who are retained by interest to plead on the other side. Some of my friends wish I had said more, but I think I have said enough. They who (admitting that my testimony is worthy of credit) are not convinced by what I have offered, would hardly be persuaded by a folio filled with particular details of misery and oppression. What may be done just now I know not, but I think this infamous traffic cannot last long, at least

this is my hope. But after the period of investigation, should it still be persevered in, I think it will constitute a national sin, and of a very deep die. I should tremble for the consequences; for, whatever politicians may think, I assuredly know there is a righteous judge who governs the earth. He calls upon us to redress the injured, and should we perversely refuse, I cannot doubt but he will plead his cause himself.

You speak of the great distance between the Adelphi and Coleman-street buildings; to me they seem almost contiguous. If I knew the convenient season, I would soon convince you that I thought it but a step. However, the penny-post affords a sort of bridge over the gulf between us, and by this medium we may converse whenever we please.

I add Mrs. Newton's affectionate respects to my own, and remain,

My dear madam,
Your obliged and obedient servant,
JOHN NEWTON.

From Miss H. More to the Rev. John Newton.

Cowslip Green, 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am really excessively obliged to you for your very agreeable and instructive letter. Whenever I receive a letter or a visit, I always feel pleased and grateful in proportion to the value I set on the time of the visiter or the writer; and when a friend who knows how to work up to advantage all the ends and fragments of his time is so good as to bestow a little portion of it on me, my heart owns the obligation; and I wish it were understood as a preliminary in all acquaintance, that where no good can be done and no pleasure given, it will be so unprofitable a commerce as to be hardly worth engaging in. I am sure your letter *gave* me pleasure, and I hope it *did* me good; so you see it is doubly included in the treaty.

Except one month that I have passed at Bath on account of health, and occasional visits to my sisters at Bristol, in this pretty quiet cottage, which I built myself two years ago, I have spent the summer. It is about ten miles from Bristol on the Exeter road, has a great deal of very picturesque scenery about it, and is the most perfect little hermitage that can be conceived. The care of my garden gives me employment, health, and spirits. I want to know, dear sir, if it is peculiar to myself to form ideal plans of perfect virtue, and to dream of all manner of imaginary goodness in untried circumstances, while one neglects the immediate duties of one's actual situation? Do I make myself understood? I have always fancied that if I could secure to myself such a quiet retreat as I have now really accomplished, I should be wonderfully good; that I should have leisure to store my mind with such and such

maxims of wisdom; that I should be safe from such and such temptations; that, in short, my whole summers would be smooth periods of peace and goodness. Now, the misfortune is, I have actually found a great deal of the comfort I expected, but without any of the concomitant virtues. I am certainly happier here than in the agitation of the world, but I do not find that I am one bit better; with full *leisure* to rectify my heart and affections, the disposition unluckily does not come. I have the mortification to find that petty and (as they are called) innocent employments can detain my heart from heaven as much as tumultuous pleasures. If to the pure all things are pure, the reverse must be also true when I can contrive to make so harmless an employment as the cultivation of flowers stand in the room of a vice, by the great portion of time I give up to it, and by the entire dominion it has over my mind. You will tell me that if the affections be estranged from their proper object, it signifies not much whether a bunch of roses or a pack of cards effects it. I pass my life in intending to get the better of this, but life is passing away, and the reform never begins. It is a very significant saying; though a very odd one, of one of the Puritans, that "Hell is paved with good intentions." I sometimes tremble to think how large a square my procrastination alone may furnish to this tesselated pavement.

I shall come London-ward next month, but shall be only geographically nearer you, as I pass much of the winter at Hampton. I shall gladly seize every opportunity of cultivating your friendship, and must still regret that your house and the Adelphi are so wide of each other. I heartily commend myself to your prayers, and am, with the most cordial esteem, dear sir, your much obliged and faithful,

H. More.

From the Rev. John Newton to Miss H. More.

1787.

My dear Madam,

It is high time to thank you for your favour of the 1st of November. Indeed, I have been thinking so for two or three weeks past, and perhaps it is well for you that my engagements will not permit me to write when I please.

Your hermitage—my imagination went to work at that, and presently built one. I will not say positively as pretty as yours, but very pretty. It stood (indeed, without a foundation) upon a southern declivity, fronting a woodland prospect, with an infant river, that is, a brook, running between. Little thought was spent upon the house, but if I could describe the garden, the sequestered walks, and the beautiful colours with which the soil, the shrubs, and the thickets were painted, I think you would like the spot. But I awoke, and behold it was a dream!

My dear friend William Cowper has hardly a stronger enthusiasm for rural scenery than myself, and my favourite turn was amply indulged during the sixteen years I lived at Olney. The noises which surround me in my present situation, of carriages and carts, and London cries, is a strong contrast to the sound of falling waters and the notes of thrushes and nightingales. But London, noisy and dirty as it is, is my post; and if not directly my choice, has a much more powerful recommendation; it was chosen for me by the wisdom and goodness of Him whose I trust I am, and whom it is my desire to serve. And therefore I am well satisfied with it: and if this busy imagination (always upon the wing) would go to sleep, I would not awaken her to build me hermitages; I want none.

The prospect of a numerous and attentive congregation, with which I am favoured from the pulpit, exceeds all that the mountains and lakes of Westmoreland can afford; and *their* singing, when their eyes tell me their voices come from the heart, is more melodious in my ear than the sweetest music of the woods. But were I not a servant who has neither right nor reason to wish for himself, yet has the noblest wish he is capable of forming gratified,—I say, were it not for my public services, and I were compelled to choose for myself, I would wish to live near your hermitage, that I might sometimes have the pleasure of conversing with you, and admiring your flowers and garden; provided I could likewise, at proper seasons, hear from others that joyful sound which it is now the business, the happiness, and the honour of my life to proclaim myself. What you are pleased to say, my dear madam, of the state of your mind, I understand perfectly well; I praise God on your behalf, and I hope I shall earnestly pray for you. I have stood upon that ground myself. I see what you yet want, to set you quite at ease, and though I cannot give it you, I trust that He who has already taught you what to desire will in his own best time do every thing for you, and in you, which is necessary to make you as happy as is compatible with the present state of infirmity and warfare; but He must be waited *on*, and waited *for*, to do this; and for our encouragement it is written, as in golden letters, over the gate of his mercy, "Ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." We are apt to wonder that when what we accounted hindrances are removed, and the things which we conceived would be great advantages are put within our power, still there is a secret something in the way which proves itself to be independent of all external changes, because it is not affected by them. The disorder we complain of is *internal*, and in allusion to our Lord's words upon another occasion, I may say, it is not any thing in our outward situation (provided it be not actually unlawful) that can prevent or even retard our advances in religion; we are defiled and impeded by that which is within. So far as our hearts are right, all places and circumstances

which his wise and good providence allots us are nearly equal; their hindrances will prove helps; losses, gains,—and crosses will ripen into comforts; but till we are so far apprized of the nature of our disease as to put ourselves into the hands of the great and only Physician, we shall find, like the woman in Luke viii. 43, that every other effort for relief will leave us as it found us.

Our first thought when we begin to be displeased with ourselves, and sensible that we have been wrong, is to attempt to reform; to be sorry for what is amiss, and to endeavour to amend. It seems reasonable to ask, what can we do more? but while we think we can do so much as this, we do not fully understand the design of the gospel. This gracious message from the God who knows our frame speaks home to our case. It treats us as sinners—as those who have already broken the original law of our nature, in departing from God our creator, supreme lawgiver, and benefactor, and of having lived to ourselves instead of devoting all our time, talents, and influence to his glory. As sinners, the first things we need are pardon, reconciliation, and a principle of life and conduct entirely new. Till then we can have no more success or comfort from our endeavours than a man who should attempt to walk whose ankle was dislocated; the bone must be reduced before he can take a single step with safety, or attempt it without increasing his pain. For these purposes we are directed to Jesus Christ, as the wounded Israelites were to look at the brazen serpent, John iii. 14, 15. When we understand what the Scripture teaches of the person, love, and offices of Christ, the necessity and final causes of his humiliation unto death, and feel our own need of such a Saviour, we then know him to be the light, the sun of the world and of the soul; the source of all spiritual light, life, comfort, and influence; having access by God to him, and receiving out of his fulness grace for grace.

Our perceptions of these things are for a time faint and indistinct, like the peep of dawn; but the dawning light, though faint, is the sure harbinger of approaching day, Prov. iv. 18. The full-grown oak that overtops the wood, spreads its branches wide, and has struck its roots to a proportionable depth and extent into the soil, arises from a little acorn: its daily growth, had it been daily watched from its appearance above ground, would have been imperceptible, yet it was always upon the increase; it has known a variety of seasons, it has sustained many a storm, but in time it attained to maturity, and now is likely to stand for ages. The beginnings of spiritual life are small likewise in the true Christian; *he* likewise passes through a succession of various dispensations, but he advances, though silently and slowly, yet surely, and will stand for ever.

At the same time it must be admitted that the Christian life is a warfare. Much within us and much without us must be

resisted. In such a world as this, and with such a nature as *ours*, there will be a call for habitual self-denial. We must learn to cease from depending upon our own supposed wisdom, power, and goodness, and from self-complacence and self-seeking, that we may rely upon Him whose wisdom and power are infinite.

It is time to relieve you; I shall therefore only add Mrs. Newton's affectionate respects. Commending you to the care and blessing of the Almighty,

I remain, my dear madam, with great sincerity,

Your affectionate and obliged servant,

JOHN NEWTON.

From Hannah More to her sister.

Boyle Farm, 1787.

I never was so astonished as to see this large and very elegant house already completely furnished; all the beautiful purple and gold pilasters of the magnificent library, the chimney-pieces, sculpture as well as painting, both designed and executed by Miss Boyle.* The doors are adorned with rich paintings, copied from the Vatican; the panels, pictures emblematical of the arts and sciences, from the Herculaneum, all done by that young lady in the short space of a year!

Mr. Soame Jenyns is dead: what a bright sun is there set! It is a great comfort to reflect that it did not set obscured with those dark doubts of the truth of the Christian religion which hung over him for so many years, and that as soon as his own views became brighter, he had the honesty to wish to clear up those of others. I now trust "he knows as he is known." As to wit, humour, gentle manners, and pure taste, I hardly know his equal; but I should not now contemplate even these amiable qualities with any satisfaction if I were not persuaded he died a sincere believer. He has left the copyright of all his works to my friend Mr. Cole. His will expressed his desire that poor Mrs. Jenyns should make hers directly; and, accordingly, she did so the next day; think of such a task at such a time! how Mr. Cole, Mrs. Boscawen, and I shall mourn when we meet!

The reader will have collected from the many reflections which are incidentally scattered over these letters, that neither the fascinations of wit and talent, nor the splendour of rank and affluence, with which the subject of this memoir was surrounded, had obscured her spiritual discernment, or rendered her blind to that fatal levity, that indifference to religion, and that disregard to the sacredness of the Sabbath, which prevailed in the higher ranks of society. She perceived all this, indeed, with all the sorrow natural to a mind full of Christian

* Lady Henry Fitzgerald.

sympathy; but she felt it her duty to do something more than lament, and resolved, with a righteous courage, to raise her voice against it. It is impossible duly to appreciate the value of the effort she made in publishing her work on "THE MANNERS OF THE GREAT," without considering that these were not the animadversions of a recluse, but of one who was flattered, admired, and courted by the very people whose vices and follies she was about to reprove; and these, too, persons whom she was in the daily habit of meeting, and whose attentions were supposed to confer distinction. Nor let it be forgotten that this publication was not the product of a censorious temper, but of a heart and understanding nobly engaged in the cause of God and the soul. She could not be ignorant that this step might probably exclude her from those circles in which she had hitherto been so conspicuous and so caressed; but the happiness of her friends was dearer to her than their favour. Thus was a new era begun in the literary life of our author. She now began to dedicate her powerful talents to the more immediate service of God and the benefit of his creatures, and made her first direct advance in the walk of a Christian moralist—that walk in which she afterward proceeded, with her mind stayed upon Him who holdeth up the goings of his people in the way of His commandments.

From Hannah More to her sister.

London, 1788.

For this last week I have been writing all day and half the night, either in prose or in verse. My book is now before the public, with its sounding title, "Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great to General Society." I really was fearful lest many of those with whom I live a good deal might think that my own views and theirs were too much alike. Occasions, indeed, continually occur in which I speak honestly and pointedly; but all one can do in a promiscuous society is not so much to start religious topics as to extract from common subjects some useful and awful truth, and to counteract the mischief of a popular sentiment by one drawn from religion; and if I do any little good, it is in this way; and this they will in a degree endure. Fine people are ready enough to join you in reprobating vice; for they are not *all* vicious; but their standard of right is low, it is not the standard of the Gospel. In this little book I have not gone deep; it is but a superficial view of the subject; it is confined to prevailing practical evils. Should this succeed, I hope, by the blessing of God, another time to attack more strongly the *principle*. I have not owned myself the author; not so much because of that fear of man which "worketh a snare," as because, if anonymous, it may be ascribed to some better person; and because I fear I do not live as I write. I hope it may be use-

ful to myself, at least, as I give a sort of public pledge of my principles, to which I pray I may be enabled to act up.

I am now busily engaged on a poem, to be called "Slavery." I grieve I did not set about it sooner; as it must now be done in such a hurry as no poem should ever be written in, to be properly correct; but, good or bad, if it does not come out at the particular moment when the discussion comes on in Parliament, it will not be worth a straw. This I shall bring out in an open, honourable manner, with my name staring in the front; but the other is to be a clandestine birth; so be sure not a word on the subject. The Bishop of London carried me to make several visits the other morning; among others, to Mrs. Delany, who seemed quite rejoiced to see me. She is as lively and agreeable as ever, and her extreme sensibility puts me in mind of a remark Mr. Burke once made to me, "that she was almost the only person he ever saw who at eighty-eight blushed like a girl."

From the same to the same.

London, Jan. 11, 1788.

On Tuesday we dined a very select little party in Portman-square, all gentlemen, except Mrs. Montagu and ourselves. Sir Joshua, Mr. Jerningham, Mr. Walpole, and Dr. Blagdon, a new blue stocking, and a very agreeable one. He is secretary to the Royal Society; so modest, so sensible, and so knowing, that he exemplifies Pope's line, "Willing to teach, and yet not proud to know." The next day I had one of our pleasant, confidential, serious *tête-à-tête* dinners with Mrs. Boscawen: she was, as usual, all affection, and said to me, "I love you for yourself, but others, who may appear equally fond of you, love you because you are the fashion:" this is so true, that I could name more than one who, provided I could entertain them, would not care though my heart ached. Mr. Walpole has asked Mrs. Boscawen's leave to have a copy of my picture, which hangs in the most conspicuous part of her drawing-room. Mrs. Walsingham has desired to take one herself for her library, and Lady Middleton intends to copy it if she can get leave; if they do obtain it, it will be without my consent and against my will.*

The next day we dined with our pleasant neighbour Mr. Batt. He set us down in the evening at Mrs. Vesey's: poor soul! a bright ray of joy broke through her clouded mind at sight of her friends. Did I tell you that Percy was bespoken by Mons. de Calonne, and that this late premier of France translated it into French, and wished to see it acted here previous to getting it up in Paris? The next day we dined at Lord Mount Edgecombe's; Mr. Walpole, who had been seeing Percy the night before, quite raved at me for not going. He

* It is now in the possession of Lady Olivia Sparrow.

was in raptures with Mrs. Siddons. All this printing work coming together has engrossed my time so much that I should have been distracted if I had dined out every day, and it has been a very pleasant confinement; for I have had a Walpole, or a Montagu, or a Porteus, or a Barrington every day. The slave cause gains proselytes, and of course opposers, every day. Mr. Wilberforce has not been well; so the day for bringing it on is not yet named. My little poem on Slavery is too short, and too much hurried; it of course will be very imperfect; for I did not begin it till a fortnight ago. I would on no account bring out so slight and so hasty a thing on any less pressing occasion, but here time is every thing.

From the same to the same.

London, 1788.

I had a kind visit from Dr. Heberden the other day, to thank me for my book which I had sent him, though without a name; but he guessed it was mine, and he did thank me indeed in a most liberal manner, by giving me for the poor Louisa a ten pound bank-note. Yesterday, as Mrs. Garrick and I were chatting, I fell on the adventures of the poor B——'s, with which she was much interested, and gave me a bank-bill of ten pounds towards furnishing the house. No end of my good fortune this week, as you know if you have seen the Hayneses. I was telling one day the history of the piety, losses, and sufferings of this good clergyman to Mrs. Bouverie, not, I confess, quite guiltless of design, and she made me a present of a twenty pound bank-note for them. I am almost tempted to say, with a certain celebrated enthusiast, "that I don't care to waste my time by dining with a man who will not give me a guinea for the poor." I met the other day our old Bath acquaintance Lady Dumfries, who obligingly remembered me, though I did not her, and we had a great deal of conversation. She seems a pious woman.

I will send you Johnson's Letters as soon as I can. You need not be very much in a hurry. There is little to gratify curiosity, or to justify impatience. They are such letters as ought to have been *written*, but ought never to have been *printed*. Still they are the true letters of friendship, which are meant to show kindness rather than wit. Every place to which he was invited, every dose of physic he took, everybody who sent to ask how he did, is recorded. I can read them with a degree of interest, because I knew and loved the man, and besides was often a party concerned in the dinners he mentions. A few of these letters are very good; sometimes he is moral, and sometimes he is kind—two points of view in which it is always agreeable to consider Johnson. I am often named, never with unkindness, sometimes with favour. The imprudence of editors and executors is an ad-

ditional reason why men of parts should be afraid to die. Burke said to me the other day, in allusion to the innumerable lives, anecdotes, remains, &c. which have been published of Johnson,—"How many maggots have crawled out of that great body!" There are some good sprightly letters from Mrs. Thrale herself; but it is odd to print one's own letters while one is alive and merry.

From the same to the same.

London, 1788.

Pray, tell dear Dr. Stonehouse I heard the Bishop of Salisbury warmly commending and recommending his book. I carried good Mrs. Trimmer there yesterday. The bishop diverted us by saying he was between two very singular women, one who undertook to reform all the *poor*, and the other all the *great*; but he congratulated her upon having the most hopeful subjects. I forgot to tell you that when the second edition had been out only six days, I had a note from Cadell to say that a third edition must be got ready immediately. I put myself in mind of Harriet Byron, in telling my own praises. I have been staying a week in the country, but yesterday I was at a party which diverted me exceedingly; it was composed of as incongruous and heterogeneous a collection as Cecilia's parties used to be, when Delville, Briggs, and Hobson met together. There were lords and ladies, and the whole corps diplomatique, some learned foreigners (with whom I had a great deal of conversation), Marchesi, the famous new opera man, General Paoli, Hutton the Moravian, and Mrs. Abington the actress: was it not a curious melange? I have renewed my acquaintance with Lady Catharine Graham, and we have visited.

From the same to the same.

London, 1788.

When I had got rid of all my printing cares and encumbrances, I went to Hampton again for a few days, which quite carried off my cold. The *secret* book seems to make its way very much in the great world; but the demon of suspicion is awakened, I am afraid, not to be lulled to sleep; however, we own nothing. At first it was currently said to be Mr. Wilberforce's: Lord Elgin came to the Bishop of London's, and assured them of this as a certain fact; but, unfortunately, going from the bishop to call on Mr. W., he found him reading it and extolling it, which put an end to *that* conjecture. Then it was as confidently reported to be the bishop himself, till somebody recollected the author had said he was not a clergyman. I received an anonymous epigram the other day, but I think I know the hand. Here it is:—

Of sense and religion in this little book
All agree there's a wonderful store;
But while round the world for an *author* they look,
I only am wishing for *More*.*

I am a little frightened; but nobody has betrayed me; it is only by the internal evidence that it is guessed at. When the author is discovered, I shall expect to find almost every door shut against me:—*mais n'importe*, I shall only be sent to my darling retirement. I spent Saturday evening at Lady Amherst's; the *book* lay on the table—several of the company took it up, talked it over, and Mr. Pepys looked me through; so that I never had such difficulty to keep my countenance. A day or two before, I dined at the Bishop of Salisbury's; I was obliged to sit to hear him, Mrs. Montagu, and the Bishop of Lincoln talk it over with the greatest warmth: all commended it, though some of the company thought it rather too strict; but the bishops justified it.

As to "*Slavery*," I know not what degree of success it has in the world at large; among the critics it is in pretty good odour; my two favourite bishops commend it, and I have had very polite and flattering letters from the Bishops of Llandaff, Peterborough, &c.; and very pleasant ones from the Dean of Canterbury and Dean Tucker, some of which I enclose.

From the Bishop of Llandaff to Miss H. More.

Great George-street, Feb. 10, 1788.

MADAM,

Allow me to return you my best thanks for the obliging present of your poem on Slavery. How much soever I may admire the excellence of the composition, it is still inferior to the excellence of the principle which gave rise to it; and I am sensible that persons of your turn of mind feel more satisfaction from the internal approbation of their own hearts, than from any praises which can, however justly, be given to their genius.

I am, madam, with great respect,
Your obliged servant,
R. LLANDAFF.†

From Dr. Horne to Miss H. More.

Magdalen College, Feb. 13, 1788.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Accept my best thanks for the valuable present of your excellent and well-timed poem on *Slavery*. When the negroes are put on board the ship, and have taken a sad farewell of their native country, nothing, it is said, can compose and solace

* It was Mrs. Walsingham's. † Dr. Watson.

them but a little music of some kind or other. May the sweet strains of your muse contribute towards procuring them comforts of a more solid and durable cast, such as you describe in your last page. Religion and humanity would determine the question speedily; but policy will exhibit many a turn and double in the chase. However, I hear that Mr. Fox has given Mr. Wilberforce the right hand of fellowship on this occasion, and will second him; so that you will have both parties enlisted under your banner. About the middle of the third century, the swarthy Cyprian, Archbishop of Carthage, presided in a council of eighty-seven African bishops. Who knows what times may be seen there again?

My wife has been much disturbed about this business of the slave-trade; till, yesterday morning, she consulted Mrs. Onslow, who was a native of one of our West India islands. She came home much comforted, with the hope that matters might not be quite so bad as they had been represented, and in the afternoon put into her tea the usual quantity of sugar. I have not yet ventured to read your poem to her, because, as she knows *you* never say the thing that is not, I am afraid it will be the occasion of withdrawing one lump, and diminishing the other.

I am, my dear madam,
Your obliged and affectionate servant,
G. HORNE.

From the Rev. J. Warton to Miss H. More.

Winchester, 1788.

MADAM,

I return you a thousand thanks for the very valuable present of your poem; for such I really think it, and must entreat you to believe that I say so with strict truth, and not in the style of idle unmeaning compliment. I do not remember *ever* to have seen so much good sense and knowledge of the world expressed so elegantly and poetically in any work of equal length. I shall religiously obey your order, in keeping to myself what ought to be generally known. I am, madam, with the truest respect,

Your much obliged and very faithful
humble servant,
JOS. WARTON.

H. More to her sister.

I had not seen Mr. Wilberforce for an age, on account of my confinement and his engagements. He sent me last week a note entreating I would meet him for one hour at Sir Charles Middleton's, but I was not able to comply. The other day, just as I was going to dinner, arrived Lady Middleton, saying I must

at all events come away with her immediately to dine with Mr. Wilberforce at her house. We had four or five hours of most confidential and instructive conversation, in which we discussed all the great objects of reform which they have in view.

Mr. Owen Cambridge came to breakfast with us yesterday, and brought himself a very pleasant letter about my poem. As he was sitting with Mrs. Garrick on one side, and me on the other, he suddenly started up, and said he was one of the most unfortunate men in the world, for he was between *popery* and *slavery*. In his letter, and in another from Mr. Walpole, both conclude with styling themselves my *slave*. Here you have Mr. Cambridge's letter.

From Mr. Cambridge to Miss H. More.

1788.

DEAR MADAM,

I return you thanks for your obliging present of your excellent and most humane poem. I have just sat down to read it, having been much employed in London. Since I cannot depend on being there at any time, or, when there, having it in my power to wait on you, I must take the liberty upon paper to comment on your second page by relating to you the ideas of a sensible negro on cosmogony, who considered that when the God of the universe created this globe, he made first a black man, and said to him, "Black man, I make you first, because you are my favourite, and therefore I give you the choice of this earth; and whatever part of it you like best shall be yours, and go to your children. In return for this partial lot, you must be good, and all blessings shall be continued to you."—"Then," said the poor fellow (to use his own words), "black man laugh. Him choose fine warm country, bring plenty to eat, want no clothes, live without labour. Black man happy, but black man no good, no deserve. So God made white man: tell him he be good; he be favourite; bid him choose where to live. White man look about: see black man got all good country—white man cry. Him forced to wear clothes for cold; him hungry; nothing to eat. Him complain. God pity him; tell him be good: he give him *head*. White man got head; him build house, make clothes, light fire, plant yam. White man laugh. But white man no good. White man got head—make black man slave—black man cry. Black man got friend—friend got head. Black man laugh."

I beg you to excuse the haste in which I am obliged to write this, who am Mrs. Garrick's humble servant, and your slave,

RICHARD OWEN CAMBRIDGE.

H. More to her sister.

Lady Juliana Penn came to thank me for the compliment paid to her name and the Quakers, in the little poem of *Slavery*.

I was over-persuaded by Lord and Lady Amherst to go to the trial, and heard Burke's famous oration of three hours and a quarter without intermission. Such a splendid and powerful oration I never heard, but it was abusive and vehement beyond all conception. Poor Hastings sitting by, and looking so meek to hear himself called *villain* and *cut-throat*, &c.! The recapitulation of the dreadful cruelties in India was worked up to the highest pitch of eloquence and passion, so that the orator was seized with a spasm which made him incapable of speaking another word, and I did not know whether he might not have died in the exertion of his powers, like *Chatham*. I think I never felt such indignation as when Burke, with Sheridan standing on one side and Fox on the other, said, "Vice incapacitates a man from all public duty; it withers the powers of his understanding, and makes his mind paralytic." I looked at his two neighbours, and saw they were quite free from any symptoms of palsy.

I am in trouble for Mrs. Delany; I was with her on Saturday. She was perfectly well and gay; but that very night was taken with a fever, and has lain dangerously ill ever since. At eighty-eight, one ought to be more willing to resign her; but all her friends are in as much anxiety about her as if she had not long been preparing for a better life. I picked up some French to-day which will please Harriet Rodd. I saw, for the first time in my life, the renowned John Wilkes; he is very entertaining; the talk falling upon bad French, he gave us some specimens of the boarding-school French where his daughter was educated. When anybody came to fetch them home, they used to go up to their governess and say, "*Madame, je suis venu pour.*" Mr. Walpole pursues his persecution of me about *Puritanism*. We spent the evening together on Saturday at Mr. Pepys's. Mr. Wilberforce sent yesterday a note to Sir Charles Middleton, to say that he and his sister were come to town for a single day, but he did not intend to appear to anybody, as he was so ill, but would come and dine there, and begged, if it were possible, they would get me to meet them. I staid of course. He appeared to be in bad health, yet he was cheerful and animated; and even in this condition, his zeal for doing good, the projects of his head and heart for serving people, and the ardour of his piety were quite edifying.

Alas! Mrs. Delany is dead. She was perfectly sensible, holding a gentleman by the hand, and telling him how full her life had been of blessings; and that what she had to look forward to was still inexpressibly happier than all she had already

enjoyed. How is that noble society of ancient days, which I used to meet in her little room, broken up, since I had the honour of being admitted there! Duchess of Manchester, Dowager Lady Gower, Duchess of Portland, Mrs. Delany herself—all gone!

Since writing the above, I have had a note from Cadell, to say a fourth edition of "Manners of the Great" must be put to press immediately; the third came out and was sold off in four hours on Saturday. Is it not unaccountable! Cadell says almost all the bishops have told him the book is mine; so now, when taxed with it, my friends do not deny it, though I have not owned it myself in words.

The bishop and Mrs. Porteus are already gone to take possession of the palace at Fulham, having left London for good; but they are so near that we shall be no great losers. With the most affectionate kindness they both pressed me to go and spend some time with them, and they would nurse me and cure my cough. They were so earnest in this request, that I certainly should have accepted it if I had not been quite well. I have however promised to spend a few days with them before I go to Bristol. Yesterday I visited Mr. Walpole, he said not a word of the little sly book, but took me to task in general terms for having exhibited such monstrously severe doctrines. I knew he alluded to the "Manners of the Great," but we pretended not to understand one another, and it was a most ridiculous conversation. He defended (and that was the joke) religion against me, and said he would do so against the whole bench of bishops: that the fourth commandment was the most amiable and merciful law that ever was promulgated, as it entirely considers the ease and comfort of the hard-labouring poor, and beasts of burden; but that it was never intended for persons of fashion, who have no occasion for rest, as they never do any thing on the other days; and indeed at the time the law was made there were no people of fashion. He really pretended to be in earnest, and we parted mutually unconverted; he lamenting that I am fallen into the heresy of *puritanical* strictness, and I lamenting that he is a person of fashion, for whom the ten commandments were not made.

To the same.

London, 1788.

I was invited to Fulham to hear the bishop preach for the first time in his own chapel on Sunday, and afterward to spend the day with him. I went with the Middletons; they have a charming palace, quite complete already, fine grounds, and every thing about them this world can give, while I trust they are preparing themselves and others for a better. I was quite delighted to see them in a situation which will enlarge his influence and usefulness; we went to chapel twice. I am

astonished at the unexpected and undeserved popularity of "the Manners:" it is in the houses of all the great. Did I tell you that some time ago Mr. Smelt walked up to me and said, without any preface, "Well, the ladies will give up every thing but the Sunday hair-dresser?" You may be sure I looked very wise.

The fifth edition of "Manners of the Great" has been in press above a week. I have only read the preface and one chapter of the three new volumes of Gibbon's book. The same gorgeous diction, the same sneers at Christianity, and the same affectation of the French manner which tainted the first volumes; yet it very fully supplies a vast chasm of information, and must always be considered as an important work. It has much merit, more mischief. I have just received a card of invitation from a countess to a concert next SUNDAY, with a conditional postscript, "if I ever do such a thing on a Sunday;" and I have sent for answer that *I never do such a thing*. After such a public testimony as I have given, one would have thought I should have escaped such an invitation. I was at a large dinner yesterday at Mrs. Montagu's, who sent many compliments to you all. The only person who was new to me was Mr. Potter, the learned and elegant translator of Æschylus. He is a very amiable and modest man. He showed me a letter from the chancellor, appointing him unasked to a desirable piece of preferment. He never saw him, but thought his literary merit entitled him to be taken notice of. Poor man, he is all gratitude, for he has had many troubles. Were you not pleased to see that Mr. Pitt had kept his promise to his friend Wilberforce, and introduced the slave business?

I passed a quiet evening at Mrs. Dickenson's, with only Lord Stormont, who, Lord Monboddo told me, is the most learned nobleman we have; he was very informing with respect to many facts that occurred during his embassy at Paris. He tells me that Madame de Sevigné's letters are going into disrepute; I am sorry that good taste is so much on the decline. I am reading my friend Mr. Bowdler's account of the Revolution in Holland; like every thing that comes from that family, it is full of truth and good sense.

To the same.

London, May 22, 1788.

I have been pleasantly engaged for a week past, during this fine weather, in going almost every day to some pleasant villa of different friends. Tuesday I dined at Strawberry Hill,—a pleasant day, and a good little party. The next day we went to a sweet place which Mr. Montagu has bought on Shooter's Hill. Another day I went to Richmond with Mrs. Boscawen, and came home in the evening to a *thé* at Mrs. Montagu's. Perhaps you do not know that a *thé* is among the stupid new

follies of the winter. You are to invite fifty or a hundred people to come at eight o'clock: there is to be a long table, or little parties at small ones; the cloth is to be laid as at breakfast; every one has a napkin; tea and coffee are made by the company, as at a public breakfast; the table is covered with rolls, wafers, bread and butter; and, what constitutes the very essence of a *thé*, an immense load of hot buttered rolls and muffins, all admirably contrived to create a nausea in persons fresh from the dinner-table. Now of all nations under the sun as I take it, the English are the greatest fools:—because the Duke of Dorset in Paris, where people dine at two, thought this would be a pretty fashion to introduce, we who dine at six must adopt this French translation of an English fashion, and fall into it as if it were an original invention; taking up our own custom at third-hand. This will be a short folly.

Poor Lady Mulgrave, married not a year, a little more than eighteen, good, great, beautiful, and happy, died yesterday in childbirth. It is hard to say whether her poor lord, her father and mother, or the Smelts are in the greatest affliction. I thought she would have proved a pattern to the young women of fashion—so domestic and so discreet! Among my country excursions I must not omit dining with Mrs. Trimmer and her twelve children at Brentford—a scene, too, of instruction and delight. The other day I was at Mr. Langton's; our subject was Abolition; we fell to it with great eagerness, and paid no attention to the wits who were round us, though there were two who were new to me—Mr. Malone, the critic of Shakspeare, and Dr. Gillies, author of the new history of Greece. I go to Mrs. Bouverie's, at Teston, for a fortnight, and then to Fulham Palace for another fortnight, and then to my own dear cottage.

From Miss H. More to the Rev. John Newton.

Cowslip Green, July 23, 1788.

My dear Sir,

I rejoice that you and Mrs. Newton are in possession of the pure delight of retirement, rural scenery, health, and friendly society, the best natural blessing of human life. "God made the country, and man made the town," says the delightfully enthusiastic bard you are so near, a sentence to which my heart always makes an involuntary warm response. I have been now some weeks in the quiet enjoyment of my beloved solitude, and the world is wiped out of my memory as with the sponge of oblivion. But, as I have observed to you before, so much do my gardening cares and pleasures occupy me, that the world is not half so formidable a rival to heaven in my heart as my garden.

I trifle away more time than I ought, under pretence (for I must have a creditable motive to impose even upon myself)

that it is good for my health; but in reality, because it promises a sort of indolent pleasure, and keeps me from thinking and finding out what is amiss in myself. The world, though I live in the gay part of it, I do not actually much love; yet friendship and kindness have contributed to fix me there, and I dearly love many individuals in it. When I am in the great world, I consider myself as in an enemy's country, and as beset with snares, and this puts me upon my guard. I know that many people whom I hear say a thousand brilliant and agreeable things disbelieve, or at least disregard, those truths on which I found my everlasting hopes. This sets me upon a more diligent inquiry into those truths; and upon the arch of Christianity, the more I press, the stronger I find it. Fears and snares seem necessary to excite my circumspection; for it is certain that my mind has more languor and my faith less energy here, where I have no temptations from without, and where I live in the full enjoyment and constant perusal of the most beautiful objects of inanimate nature, the lovely wonders of the munificence and bounty of God. Yet, in the midst of his blessings I should be still more tempted to forget him, were it not for frequent nervous headaches and low fevers, which I find to be wonderfully wholesome for my moral health. I feel grateful, dear sir, for your kind anxiety for my best interests. My situation is, as you rightly apprehend, full of danger; yet less from the pleasures than from the deceitful favour and the insinuating applause of the world. The goodness of God will, I humbly trust, preserve me from taking up with so poor a portion: nay, I hope what he has given me is to show that all is nothing, short of himself; yet there are times when I am apt to think it a great deal, and to forget him who has promised to be my portion for ever.

I am delighted, as you rightly conjectured, with the "Pilgrim's Progress." I forget my dislike to allegory while I read the spiritual vagaries of his fruitful imagination.

Yours, dear sir,
Most faithfully,
H. More.

From Mr. Walpole to Miss H. More.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 17, 1788.

Dear Madam,

I am unwilling to write letters whenever I have no present topic to occupy me but my own disorder, which being chronical and rarely dangerous, I do not choose to fatigue my correspondents with it. If Mrs. Dickenson has answered a very pleasant letter she showed me from you above a week ago, she will probably have told you that I am confined again by the gout in my left arm and hand; it is going off, and I hope to be at liberty in two or three days. I judge with great plea-

sure, by your letters, that you are quite recovered of your winter's illness.

Miss —— has left Richmond; perhaps they have not told you that it is to humour the caprice of the poor mad sister, who sent for her, I believe very unnecessarily; and she is too good not to sacrifice her own enjoyments and peace to what she thinks her duty. Our other poor friend* grows dreadfully worse, that is, violent and untractable; so that if they could have company, I fear it will soon not be decent to admit them; but I am afflicting your tender mind to no purpose. I had better have talked of my own gout, which is no great calamity.

In this great discovery of a new mine of Madame de Sevigné's letters, my faith, I confess, is not quite firm. Do people sell houses wholesale without opening their cupboards? This age, too, deals so much in false coinage, that booksellers and Birmingham give equal vent to what is not sterling; with the only difference, that the shillings of the latter pretend the names are effaced, and the wares of the former pass under borrowed names. Have we not seen, besides all the *testaments politiques*, the spurious letters of Ninon de l'Enclos of Pope Ganganelli, and the memoirs of the Princess Palatine? This is a little mortifying, while we know that there actually exists at Naples a whole library of genuine Greek and Latin authors, most of whom probably have never been in print; and where it is not unnatural to suppose the works of some classics, yet lost, may be in being, and the remainder of some of the best; yet at the rate in which they proceed to unrol, it would take as many centuries to bring them to light as have elapsed since they were overwhelmed. Nay, another eruption of Vesuvius may return all the volumes to chaos! Omar is stigmatized for burning the library of Alexandria—is the King of Naples less a Turk? is not it almost as unconscientious to keep a seraglio of virgin authors under the custody of nurses, as of blooming Circassians? Consider, my dear madam, I am past seventy, or I should not be so ungallant as to make the smallest comparison between the contents of the two harems. Your picture, which hangs near my elbow, would frown, I am sure, if I had any light meaning.

Adieu, my dear madam,

I am most cordially yours,

HORACE WALPOLE.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Walpole.

Cowslip Green, Sept. 1788.

You were exceedingly good indeed, dear sir, to write to me with one hand, while the other was in pain; and there is no

* Mrs. Vesey.

pain for which I feel such keen sensibility as the gout, from the bitter affinity I fancy it has with the rheumatism, my familiar acquaintance; you were in hopes to be quite free from it in a few days, and as poets were wont to be considered as prophets, I am willing to cherish the prediction, and trust in its accomplishment. I give you leave to be as severe as you please on the demoniacal mummery which has been acting in this country; it was, as is usual with prodigies, the operation of fraud upon folly. In vain do we boast of the enlightened eighteenth century, and conceitedly talk as if human reason had not a manacle left about her, but that philosophy had broken down all the strong-holds of prejudice, ignorance, and superstition; and yet, at this very time, Mesmer has got a hundred thousand pounds by animal magnetism in Paris. Mainaduc is getting as much in London. There is a fortune-teller in Westminster who is making little less. Lavater's physiognomy books sell at fifteen guineas a set. The diving rod is still considered as oracular in many places. Devils are cast out by seven ministers: and to complete the disgraceful catalogue, slavery is vindicated in print, and defended in the House of Peers! Poor human reason, when wilt thou come to years of discretion!

I do hope you will stumble somehow on my odd friends at ——. They are the only people I ever knew who have written more books than they have read; and they often put me in mind of the Frenchman's answer when he was reproached with having no library, *Quand je veux des livres j'en fais.* These queer, merry, and eccentric neighbours furnish amusement wherever they go. I have been a whole week absent from my little cottage, the garden of which is now green enough to disgust a Frenchman, and have been gambolling after duchesses, wits, and such sort of people.

I have been to visit at Stoke, and my pleasant friend Dr. Warton, who has been at Clifton, came to me; he raves about you and a certain *Walpoliana*, which, he says, if it be ever finished, will be the pleasantest book that ever was written. And now I am going into Berkshire to Mrs. Montagu's for ten days; after which, I think, nothing shall tear me from my household gods till my annual migration to London. I return you very many thanks for the great pleasure your savoury *morsels* of *criticism* have given me: I devoured them with great appetite, and found my provisions exhausted before my hunger was gratified. Lord Melcombe's flaming pyre is incomparable, and the artful skill and even-handed justice with which you have hitched in the two illustrious sons of the two great rival ministers is a *chef d'œuvre* in its kind. You have contrived to do ample justice to Lord Chesterfield's genius, without sparing that detestable system. I am delighted with your *little fantastic aristocracy.*

Yours, dear sir,
Very faithfully, H. More.

To the same.

Cowslip Green, Nov. 1788.

Casa mia, casa mia!
Per piccina che tu sia,
Tu mi pari Una Badia!

I am just returned home, after rambling for six weeks; the above, I remember, was the first Italian sentence I ever saw; it caught hold of my memory and of my affections, and even now never fails to be the first idea that occurs to me, when I exchange the mansions of the great for my lowly roof and thatch. I have a notion that the pleasure I derive from this solitude is of the same vain kind that Ovid felt among the Scythians during his exile, because, says he, "here I find none wittier than myself." Had I lived here about a century ago, the remark would not have been quite so modest; for from this obscure village sprang the intellectual Hercules, whose single arm discomfited the rabble of the schoolmen, broke the ranks of Aristotle, and swept away the metaphysic cobwebs which the subtle spiders of casuistry had been weaving with fruitless industry for many an age. But to descend from a jargon as pompous and unintelligible as the subject I am speaking of, you are to know, that in a little white house in this village was born John Locke. He did not intend to be born here, but his mother was on a visit when she produced this bright *idea*, and so bequeathed me something to boast of.*

I hope, dear sir, you feel how very *amiable* it is of me to have imposed on myself the rigorous law of not answering your agreeable letter for so many weeks, because I would not ensnare you into a commerce which, however pleasant to me, might be burdensome to you. I should hate to owe a letter to your equity, still less to your politeness; no, it must be a voluntary favour, sheer kindness. The pleasure is so much more animated at receiving what is given than what is due; the very idea of one's having a right takes away from the sentiment, and the least notion of a claim kills the pleasure of the intercourse.

Yours, my dear sir,
Very faithfully,
H. M.

From the Rev. John Newton to Miss H. More.

My dear Madam,

I begin (when I may finish I know not), on a memorable day to me, the anniversary of my dear Eliza's translation to a

* Mrs. Montagu soon after this presented her with an urn, to the memory of Locke, which still stands in her garden at Barley Wood, fronting the house where he was born.

better world. It is several years since she ceased to be seen, though, strictly speaking, the *she* who is gone was never seen by us. She is no loser by having deposited in the grave that vehicle under which she was conversant here. The earthly dwelling concealed the inhabitant within, and greatly restrained the exertion of her noblest powers. She was first seen by inhabitants of a better world in the moment when she was released from this prison state, and then likewise she herself first began to *see* clearly. For in this life we have neither eyes nor light fully adapted to those objects which alone are commensurate to the grasp and capacity of an immortal soul. Solemn and important is our Lord's declaration, "Ye must be born again." In the unborn infant, the faculties and powers of a human creature are as yet in a dormant state. Like the idols of the heathen, it has eyes, but sees not; ears, but hears not. Could we suppose, for a moment, that the infant was intelligent before its birth, and was to receive, some way, an information that it was shortly to appear in the world, it would still be utterly at a loss to form any adequate conceptions of the world into which it was to be introduced. In like manner we bring with us into this world no more than a capacity, or rather a capability, of a second birth, by which we begin to live a new life in a new world, even while we continue here. Till this happy moment arrives, our understandings, affections, and noblest powers are all cramped and confined, and are incapable of discerning their proper objects. God is everywhere, but we have no such perception of his presence and perfections, and of our relation to him, and dependence on him as creatures, as can engage us to love, fear, serve, or trust him. Eternity is near, and the next hour may remove us into it, yet our thoughts and pursuits are confined to the things of time, and we have no serious, fixed, enlightened apprehension of any thing beyond them. A new unbounded prospect breaks in upon the mind that is touched by the enlivening power of God's holy Spirit, productive of so universal a change in our desires, hopes, and aims that it may be fitly compared to a new birth. The *rational* life is not more superior to the *animal*, nor more distinct from it, than this spiritual life is superior to them both. This qualifies us for the higher enjoyment of the unseen state, which alone can fully satisfy the original thirst and capacity of our souls, and make us truly and finally happy. But it does not fully admit us to them. There are considerable measures of true knowledge, grace, and comfort not suitable to the present life; but they who have attained the most have the strongest sense of the apostle's meaning, when he said, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." The most we have in hand, compared with what we are encouraged yet to hope for, is but as a few ears of the first-fruits compared with the full harvest. My line of analogy, therefore, leads me to consider death as a *third* birth,

by which those who have been born again, and who are delivered from the love and spirit of the present evil world, are, as by a gate, admitted into the kingdom of eternal life, into that kingdom the particulars of which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." There is, perhaps, a power belonging to the soul suited to the glories of the unseen world, as the eye is suited to receive the light of the sun, but which power is at present dormant and inactive; though God (to whom all things are possible and easy), in some special cases, has seen fit to draw it forth into exercise. Thus Stephen, before his death, beheld the heavens opened, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, as ready to receive his departing spirit; and thus the apostle Paul, though not sure that he was out of the body, was rapt into the third heavens, saw invisibles, and heard unutterables. But ordinarily we are to walk by faith, not by sight. But there is an appointed hour when death breaks down the barrier, opens the prison-door, and the willing spirit (I mean of a person who has been already twice born) is in an instant made partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light, filled with joy, and surrounded with glory.

Thus it was with our dear Eliza; I will not say she died on the 6th of October, 1785, rather that was her birthday; here she died daily, but then she began to live indeed. Faint as the impression is which this subject makes upon me, it is sufficient to excite my pity for all that the world admires, except in so far as it is improved into a subserviency to this great, untried, inconceivable event. The moment after death will be a wonderful one. How we shall then feel, what we shall then meet with, and in what state we shall then be fixed, are questions of vast importance; nor can reason or philosophy afford any tolerable answers to them. We are indebted for such satisfaction as we can at present receive to revelation; and especially to Him who, having by his own self made atonement for our sins, and abolished death, and him that had the power of death, has brought life and immortality to light by his Gospel.

But it is time to relieve you. Before I close my letter, I must charge it to present our joint affectionate respects to you and to your sisters. I have been stationary this summer. Had I the direction of my own path (it is my great mercy that I have not), I think I should often visit Bristol. So far as I can judge by the short experiment I made last year, I think I should feel myself much at home there. But I am placed like a sentinel here, and must not quit my post without leave; that is, without some leadings and openings of Divine Providence, which point out, to the satisfaction of my mind, when I may go and what route I may take. I am still favoured with a confirmed state of health. Mrs. Newton, though seldom visited with severe illness, is seldom well. We have lived together forty years. At our time of life, gentle and repeated

intimations that this state cannot be our rest, and that if life should be prolonged, the days are coming when we shall find no pleasure from temporal objects, cannot be deemed unseasonable. If trials are but sanctified to wean us from a world which we must soon quit, we have reason to be thankful for them, and to number our crosses among our chief mercies.

I shall hope, upon your next return to London, if we should be still spared, you will be able to favour us with more of your company. The little taste we have had of it makes us very desirous of a further acquaintance; but whether I see you or not, I am bound to pray that the Lord may bless you wherever you are, guide you with his eye, and support you with his arm in safety across this enchanted ground; and that we may at last meet in the kingdom of light, love, and joy, to join in unceasing worship and praise, before the throne of Him who loved us, and redeemed us to God by his blood

I am, very sincerely, my dear madam,

Your affectionate and obliged servant,

J. NEWTON.

From Mr. Pepys to Miss Hannah More.

Broadstairs, Isle of Thanet, Sept. 26, 1788.

MY DEAR AND WORTHY FRIEND,

I will not let another summer pass without putting in my claim for at least one token of your kind remembrance, and the pleasure of hearing in what manner you are passing your time. This is my season of contemplation and retrospection, and among other sins of omission with which I have charged myself, is (what I should rather call a folly than a sin) that of not having written to you last summer, and by that means having suffered you to discontinue the laudable custom of letting me hear from you when at a distance.

What has particularly made you occur to my thoughts at this place is the contrast which I have drawn between you and myself, when we are both in a state of retirement. You, I doubt not, have been dividing your time between active offices of kindness to others and some employment, which, at the same time that it does good to others, will distinguish yourself; whereas, here am I, letting day after day pass, in riding, and reading Juvenal, and doing no good to anybody but my own dear boy, who, as I love as well as myself, may be considered as myself. If I could but write something to correct the *manners* of the *highest*, or to excite compassion for the *lowest*, I should look back upon the summer with some satisfaction, not to mention the very secondary and inferior consideration of enjoying in the winter that most flattering of all distinctions, the celebrity arising from fine talents most usefully employed. I know now what wicked proverb occurs to you; that "*ex nihilo, nil fit*," and that if I could but find these said talents, I should

find employment for them *fast enough*, as the vulgar say. I am seriously in hopes that this will plead my excuse, and that what I am apt to attribute to indolence and want of resolution is nothing more than want of ability, though I believe the reverse is much oftener the case. I was riding and meditating in this manner the other day, when I heard the bell toll in a neighbouring village, and upon inquiring for whom it tolled, was informed that it was for poor Sheridan, who finished his career at Margate. I think the day will come when many of his objections to the present mode of education will be considered, and when a father will not be compelled to tread in the same beaten path, because all his son's contemporaries are going the same way; and yet it is too hazardous for an individual to strike out into an unfrequented road; for though, as a fine writer very justly and very forcibly observes, we must each of us *die* for ourselves, yet certain it is that we must in a great degree *live for others* and *with* others, though we may not in all instances choose to live *like* others.

The harvest here is luxuriant beyond description, and my little boy and I address the farmers in Thomson's beautiful apostrophe in favour of the gleaners (when they do not hear us)—

"How good the God of harvest is," &c.

On a certain frosty day at Thames Ditton, I offered you my assistance for your poor Louisa; you did not want it then, but I have since heard that the subscription has fallen off; I therefore beg of you to remember, that if in that or any other of your benevolent acts you will take me with you *in tow*, you will oblige me very much. Mrs. P. desires to be most kindly remembered to you.

Yours ever,

W. Pepys.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Pepys.

Cowslip Green, Sept. 1788.

"*Heureux le peuple dont l'histoire ennuie*," says somebody. The best times to live in are often the worst to write about. In a novel or a comedy, the moment the lovers are settled and happy, they become so insipid that another page of the one, or an additional scene of the other, would be quite surfeiting. If anybody were to write a play about good sort of quiet, reasonable, orderly, prosperous people, the audience would not be able to sit out the first act; they would long for the relief of a little distress, and languish for the refreshment of a little misery. I do almost think the Tyburn Chronicle a more interesting book than Sydney's Arcadia; for however cheap one may hold the morals of the heroes of the former work, it exhibits a delineation of the same strong passions which actuated

"Macedonia's Madman, and the Swede," and furnishes out the terrible catastrophes to tragedies, only operating with a difference of education, circumstance, and opportunity. All this verbiage means to say that I have, during the whole summer, kept the "even tenour of my way" with such sober and quiet uniformity, that the history of my adventures would make as dull a novel as could be had at a circulating library, and that is saying a great deal. I do not however *complain*; I have lived much to my own taste, and have enjoyed some of the best blessings of human life; tolerable health, "retired leisure," beautiful rural scenery, a garden full of roses, and books, if I had industry to read them. Apropos of the latter, I was in imminent danger of waiting till winter for Gibbon's last volumes, as I never think of *buying* a book till it is shrunk to much smaller dimensions than the corpulent quarto; but, by the greatest good luck in the world, I have a neighbour who reads; so that I have almost waded through that mass of impiety and bad taste. I protest I think if this work were to become the standard of style and religion, that Christianity and the English language would decay pretty nearly together; and the same period would witness the downfall of sound principles and of true taste. I have seldom met with more affectation, or less perspicuity. The instances of false English are many; and of false taste endless. I find little of the sober dignity of history; and the notes are as immodest (even without my being able to read Greek) as they are profane. In numberless passages he is so obscure, that the fashionable phrase of the *luminous* pages of Gibbon seems to be as diametrically opposite to the truth as Bishop Sprat's éloge on Cowley's learning, which he quaintly said was *enamelled* and not *embossed*; and which seems to me (who *dote* on Cowley in other views) to be directly contrary to the fact; for his learning, in poetry at least, is not only too prominent, and in too obvious relief, but it is what the embroiderers call appliquée: very often the plain web of his sense would be beautiful, if it were not spoiled by the tinsel and spangles which he tacks on to it. Among a thousand other proofs of Gibbon's want of clearness, pray turn, if you have the book at hand, to the story (page 310, vol. v.) which gave rise to Hughes's charming play of the siege of Damascus. I have read it three times, and were not the tragedy fresh in my memory, I should be at a loss to understand the story. That you may not think, by all this criticism, that I am blinded by prejudice, I will own that *par ci et par la*, I have been well amused, particularly with Justinian, Belisarius, and the accounts of the pastoral nations. I think he has made but little of Mahomet, considering the real greatness of the subject, and its peculiar suitableness to his own gorgeous pen and sensual temper.

I beg your pardon for running on thus, instead of telling you how much I was gratified with your letter; the more so as it

was a volunteer, and came without dun or flapper from me. I suppose one likes a first letter better than a reply, from the odd principle in nature which makes one prefer a present before a debt, or a favour before a duty; one is apt to put it down to the merit side of the account, and self-love makes one believe that it is sheer regard, without any deductions on the score of necessity, obligation, or compulsion. I am glad you are so delightfully situated. But why always an island? last year the Isle of *Wight*; now the Isle of *Thanet*. Of all the birds in the air, I should have least suspected *you* of this insular taste. You, who so delight to build among the singing birds, seem to have flown from their society; but your own nest now begins to produce company and harmony enough. I am glad William tastes Spenser; I was afraid he would have grown wise and philosophical; but you give me hope now that he will keenly relish the charming illusions of poetry; and I hope that while he will form the justest and soundest notions of the world that *is*, he will derive a thousand pathetic and pensive delights from the world that is *not*. Can I talk of the delights of song, and neglect to tell you that I have had the great pleasure of having Dr. Warton at Clifton for some time? And we talked of poetry and criticism from morn till night. The delightful enthusiast has lost nothing of his fine spirits. I would you had been with us.

I am going to leave my beloved solitude, to pay a visit to Mrs. Montagu, who has her nephew and niece and the new babe with her. I shall stay near a fortnight. Mrs. Garrick is to give me the meeting.

You have of course heard that a mine of literary wealth is said to have been found in some old castle,—a great bundle of letters of Madame de Sevigné: Mr. Walpole's faith, however, is but weak—nor is mine strong; these constant forgeries make even the credulous skeptical. I could but smile at your alluding so gravely to what you supposed me to be employed about; I assure you gravely, and in sober truth, that this rambling letter is by much the longest, the most serious, and most considerable composition I have attempted this summer. Nay, so far am I from having written a page or a line of any thing new, that I have actually let an old thing, which has not been unsuccessful, lie out of print almost a twelvemonth, because I cannot bring myself to sit down to look over and correct merely the errors of the press. I find sloth the besetting sin of solitude. But is it not as well *de ne rien faire* as *faire des riens*?

Many thanks for your kind offer about Louisa. I shall have no need of your bounty on this occasion, for a reason which I have not left myself paper enough to explain. As she is grown quite stupid and hopeless, it will be best to get her settled in an hospital; which I am doing. It is well you have a whole

island to yourself, or you could never find time to read such an immeasurable letter. It is well, too, you don't get them often. My kindest regards to Mrs. Pepys. I rejoice she has so pleasant a window to look out at: it seems but a small thing, but it makes half the pleasure of my life; *my* pleasant window I mean.

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Cowslip Green, Sept. 1788.

My dear Madam,

Though my last letter was actually written before I was indulged with yours, yet my conscience has not been quite at rest at the two or three shabby disingenuous lines I foisted in afterward. This is my full and true confession; I wished sincerely to try if it were not possible for me to escape detection—I therefore resolved not to name my design, nor show the MS. to any one, and but one human being knew of it. Another reason for not communicating it even to such a confidential, and wise, and tried friend as yourself, my dear madam, was to save you the necessity of either confessing what would have betrayed the secret, or denying what you knew to be true—a sacrifice of your principles which I no more dared require than you would have been willing to make: so, in full confidence of never being found out, I stole abroad. I had many reasons for wishing to be unknown, not *all* so base as the prevailing one of fear: I was conscious that I did not live up to my song, in the first place; in the second, I was seriously persuaded that my insignificant name could not add weight or strength to the book, but might *diminish* it; and I thought the chances were, that while the author remained a secret, the "Manners of the Great" might be supposed to be the work of some wiser and better person than a discovery would prove it to be. With all these sage thoughts in my head, judge of my confusion the first three days, to receive above half a dozen letters of kind congratulation from my detectors. I have never answered any of them, for what could I say? I am, however, really sorry for it. I thought it a master-stroke of policy not to send either Mrs. Garrick or you a copy, as it would, I fancied, be conceived impossible that, had it been mine, that could have been omitted.

My dear madam, I truly think that you must be among the very few to whom this bold little book will not give offence. Pray write to me *sans menagement* what they (I mean those to whom it is addressed) say of it, for I know nothing here, only Cadell sends me word another new edition is wanted. Your kind letter, as also that to the Bishop of London, which he sent me, quite penetrated me; and will counterbalance much severe judgment, which I must and do expect from others.

Do you know, my dear madam, as I have said before, I feel a little awkward about this same book? I am so afraid that strangers will think me good! and there is a degree of hypocrisy in appearing so much better than one is. I cannot help applying to myself what Prior made Solomon say in his idolatrous state, "They brought my Proverbs to confute my life."

I should the more regret this long exile from my good friends, but that I hope the flutter of the book will be quite over by the time I make my appearance among you. My dear madam, be *candid* as well as kind, and frankly tell me all the criticisms you hear upon it. I don't wish to hear them merely that I may be humbled, but that I may be mended; as I shall, I hope, always "be proud to learn of able men," and thankfully correct every error they may point out; my request includes able *women* also.

I hope you will have met your dear duchess and her fine family all well. I congratulate you on their arrival, as in their absence something must be always wanting to your happiness. You have whetted my desires after Mr. Warton, but I will keep that delicious morsel untouched for London, as I am at present hampered in a great deal of less pleasant reading. Mr. Gibbon's pompous but very informing history of a dull period I think I never shall get through; I sit down to it with disgust, and rise unentertained; I had almost said, enraged. With what malignant delight does he dwell on the first corruptions of the church, and how does he enjoy the failings of the fathers, of which, truth to speak, there is a plentiful crop. He does not, as in the first volume, stab openly with the broad sabre of Infidelity; yet, where he finds a sore place, instead of mollifying it with ointment, how does he delight to pour over it cold aconite and deadly hellebore!—but how I run on upon what you know so much better.

My dear madam,

Yours most faithfully,

H. More.

CHAPTER II.

At the beginning of the year 1789, we meet with the following letters from Miss More to her sister:

Hampton, Jan. 6, 1789.

We came to Hampton on Friday. It was so dismally cold, I should not have been sorry to have staid in town, if I could have remained peaceably at home. We went on New-year's day to dinner at Mrs. Montagu's, where we were twelve, all men except myself and Mrs. Boscawen. The next day, to my

great satisfaction, we came to our solitude. The first amusing business that Cadell put into my hands was to correct the seventh edition of "*Manners*." Instead of being thankful as I ought, I was rather provoked at such a disagreeable job. All the private accounts of the king are still better than the public ones. They say he talks to Willis of his complaint, and of the best method of treating it. He spoke with great calmness and soundness of mind of the King of Spain's death, and said, "I cannot be such a hypocrite as to pretend to be sorry, for he was never a friend to me or to this country."

As to Pitt, if I were a pagan I would raise altars and temples to him, but I rejoice with trembling; he has reached the summit of human glory, and is not that summit a very slippery point! The death of the speaker is an awful event at such a moment. Both parties were equally accusing him of designing to hurt their cause by a feigned sickness. It reminds one of Burke's remark on the candidate who died during the Bristol election. "What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!"

Hampton, Jan. 1789.

We have passed the whole time since my last in complete solitude, except that Mrs. Kennicott spent a few days with us. Poor Dr. Adams! how little a time since I was at Pembroke College with him and Mrs. Adams, Dr. Xenophon Edwards, Johnson, and Henderson, not one of whom are now alive. *I* have been spared; *they* have been taken: let me adore the long-suffering of God, who has given me so long a space for repentance.

Does not Pitt fight like a hero for the poor queen? but who will fight for *him*, for he has not a hundred a-year in the world. Like an honest old house-steward going to be turned off, he is anxious to put every thing in order, and leave the house in such condition that the next servants may do as little mischief as possible. How unkindly the opposition treated Wilberforce! but he is not only of a very different spirit, but is a match for them at their own weapon—eloquence, of which few men have more; and with as much wit as if he had no piety. Mrs. Boscawen writes me word that politics were never carried so high in private conversation; it is quite disgusting; more virulence was never known. The poor king the other night, after Dr. Willis had read prayers to him, prayed aloud for himself. On the 17th he said to the page, Remember that to-morrow is the queen's birthday, and I insist upon having a new coat. As for Pitt, he goes on triumphantly.—Excellent accounts of the king to-day; private accounts, too, better than have yet been circulated.

From the same to the same.

London, Feb. 16, 1789.

Poor Mrs. Handcock, Mrs. Vesey's dear friend and companion, is dead. It is melancholy to look at that house, where I have seen so many ingenious people, and heard so much pleasant conversation, and made so many friendships, and to think that of its two mistresses, whose faces were never turned towards me but with kindness, who never received me without affection, or parted from me without regret,—one is a corpse, and the other bereft of her faculties; what a call for serious reflection! I want to get my heart more affected with feeling for the sorrows of others, and with gratitude for my own mercies! I am just summoned down to the Montague's, who have called to welcome our arrival. Mrs. Garrick is gone to-night to a private subscription concert, known by the name of the Lady's Concert, a very sober amusement, and the only one at which my lords the bishops appear. Having spent last evening with Sir Lucas Pepys, who was just come from Kew, I have the great satisfaction of confirming all the good intelligence you receive from the papers. I had also the same fresh from Sir George Baker; and even Dr. Warren confesses that his royal patient is recovering. I believe he is the first person whose character was ever raised by the loss of his reason; but almost every thing that escapes him has either good-nature, or humanity, or piety in it. The following specimen has good sense too; walking in the garden (which he does to the amount of seven or eight miles a day) with Dr. Willis, the latter descried two or three of the workmen, and ordered them to withdraw; "Willis," said the king, "you do not know your own business, let the men come back again; you ought to accustom me to see people by degrees, that I may be prepared for seeing them more at large." Mrs. Boscawen's house joins Kew Gardens: seeing the workmen had made a fire to burn rubbish, he said, "Pray put out that fire directly; don't you see it smokes Mrs. Boscawen's house!"

In the midst of all these cares and distractions, a friend of mine called on Pitt the other night. He found him alone, gay and cheerful, his mind totally disengaged from the scenes in which he had passed the day. He was reading Milton aloud with great emphasis, and he said his mind was so totally engaged in Paradise that he had forgotten there were any people in the world but Adam and Eve. This seems a trifle, but it is an indication of a great mind, so entirely to discharge itself of such a load of care, and to find pleasure in so innocent and sublime an amusement.

And so the geraniums are gone. Mrs. Barrington, to whom I communicated this calamity, and who is a deep botanist, says, she much questions if they are actually dead; to be sure it is a grievous loss. A few days since we had a most magnificent

dinner at my Lord Amherst's; I love him, because of his faithful attachment to the king. The Bishop of London has sent me his pamphlet on the "*Transfiguration;*" it is very ingenious.

From the same to the same.

London, Feb. 25, 1789.

I should certainly have written you a line on that blessed Thursday when the chancellor made the memorable communication of the king's being convalescent, but the post was gone. I was out at dinner, and we were talking on what would probably be the event of things, when lo! a violent rap at the door, and Lord Mount Edgecombe was announced. He came in almost breathless, directly from the House of Lords, and told us that the king was recovered. We were quite transported, and Mrs. Garrick fairly got up and kissed him before the company. Soon afterward arrived the Duke of Beaufort, confirming the good news.

Yesterday I was at dinner at the Bishop of Salisbury's, who had been at Kew in the morning, and found all prosperous. Hear a diverting instance of ONE prejudice of party. Mr. Erskine gravely affirmed the other day that Pitt was no orator; that his genius wanted that particular faculty which constitutes eloquence. The Bishop of London defended Mr. Pitt most ably, and forced the other to make such concessions, that we thought a great orator might be well made up out of what even *he* allowed him to possess. Erskine was very entertaining, and not quite so overbearing as he sometimes is. I have been to pay the wedding compliments to Lord and Lady Bathurst, as Lord Apsley was married the day before yesterday, to a niece of the Duke of Richmond's, very pretty, very accomplished, and very amiable. Mrs. Garrick sends her love.

From the same to the same.

London, March 9, 1789.

A day or two ago, I had a note from the Bishop of London, saying I must dine at his house on that day, for he had engaged a gentleman to meet me. I was much puzzled who it could be, and who should appear but Dr. Willis; the good-natured bishop kindly foreseeing it would be delightful to me. He is the very image of simplicity; quite a good, plain, old-fashioned country parson; he is seventy-three. As we had nobody else at dinner besides the master of the rolls,* I was indulged in asking the doctor all manner of impertinent questions, which I did to the amount of about nine hundred, and which he was much pleased to answer. He never saw, he

* Then Sir Pepper Arden.

said, so much natural sweetness and goodness of mind, united to so much piety, as in the king. During his illness, he many times shed tears for Lord North's blindness. The Bishop of London had been to the king that morning; he was in a very devout frame of mind, which his enemies will say is the surest sign he is still deranged. He told the bishop, "that at the worst, his trust in God had never forsaken him; that *that* confidence alone had been his support." He added, "that he wished to return his thanks to Almighty God in the most public manner, and hoped the bishop would not refuse him a sermon." He proposed going to St. Paul's to do it. It was a grand idea, and I think it will be one of the most awful scenes since the opening of Solomon's Temple; but they dissuade him very much from it; thinking that the concourse and joy of the people would be too much for his feelings. He himself has named one of the Psalms for the thanksgiving-day, and the xiith of Isaiah for the lesson.

From the same to the same.

London, March 17, 1789.

The queen and princesses came to see the illumination, and did not get back to Kew till after one o'clock. When the coach stopped, the queen took notice of a fine gentleman who came to the coach-door without a hat. This was the king, who came to hand her out. She scolded him for being up, and out so late; but he gallantly replied, "he could not possibly go to bed and sleep till he knew she was safe." There never was so joyous, so innocent, and orderly a mob. I was very sorry I could not go, as invited, to Lady Cremorne, to see *her* way of celebrating the festivity. She had two hundred Sunday-school children, thirty-six of whom she clothed for the occasion; they walked in procession to the church; after service they walked back to her house,—where, after singing a psalm of praise, and God save the King, they had a fine dinner of roast-beef and plum-pudding. Then the whole two hundred marched off with baskets under their arms, full of good things for their parents. I spent an evening lately with this charming lady.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Walpole.

That unprincely vagabond Queen Christina, said of the learned Vossius, "that he not only knew from whence words came, but whither they were going." The last half of this knowledge is all that is claimed by the writer of the enclosed jargon. It is an attempt, from the bon ton gabble of the present age, to anticipate the general style of the next. This pert censor has not the presumption to quarrel with the neutralizing of foreign *words*, the discreet adoption of which adds

opulence and ornament to our language, but (as she loves to sin in the very act of censure, and as the greatest rogue always turns king's evidence) she laments the peregrinity of *style*, the foreign fabrication of *sentences*, which is wearing away the beauty, diluting the spirit, and diminishing the force of our tongue. The courtly ease of the style of Addison, the sinewy force and clear precision of Swift, and the elegant vigour of a work well known to, but not duly appreciated by, Mr. Walpole, called the Castle of Otranto, are untainted with this spreading corruption, and exhibit models of good taste in their several species of composition.

In the enclosed nonsense, though there is not one French *word*, there is not one English *idiom*. I confess I have been guilty of the most malicious exaggeration, but I was forced to allow for the increasing degeneracy of fifty years, in which period I suppose our style may have reached the acmé of defect, the perfection of abomination; for I am willing to hope that all the artillery of affectation and false taste continually battering it will not be able, in less time, completely to demolish so noble a structure as the English language.

I feel so much ashamed of the nonsense I have written, that I dare not add a name which would disgrace my best title—that of Mr. Walpole's

Most obedient and much obliged
Humble servant.

P.S.—Taste is of all ages, and truth is eternal; and there is a truth in taste almost as demonstrable as any mathematical proposition.

A specimen of the English language, as it will probably be written and spoken in the next century. In a letter from a lady to her friend in the reign of George the Fifth.

Alamode Castle, June 20, 1840.

DEAR MADAM,

I no sooner found myself here than I visited my new apartment, which is composed of five pieces; the small room which gives upon the garden is practised through the great one, and there is no other issue. As I was quite exceeded with fatigue, I had no sooner made my toilet, than I let myself fall on a bed of repose, where sleep came to surprise me.

My lord and I are in the intention to make good cheer, and a great expense, and this country is in possession to furnish wherewithal to amuse one's self. All that England has of illustrious, all that youth has of amiable, or beauty of ravishing, sees itself in this quarter. Render yourself here then, my friend, and you shall find assembled all that there is of best, whether for letters, whether for birth.

Yesterday I did my possible to give to eat; the dinner was of the last perfection, and the wines left nothing to desire. The

repast was seasoned with a thousand rejoicing sallies, full of salt and agreement, and one more brilliant than another. Lady Frances charmed me as for the first time; she is made to paint, has a great air, and has infinitely of expression in her physiognomy; her manners have as much of natural as her figure has of interesting.

I had prayed Lady B. to be of this dinner, as I had heard nothing but good of her: but I am now disabused on her subject; she is past her first youth, has very little instruction, is inconsequent and subject to caution; but having evaded with one of her pretenders, her reputation has been committed by the bad faith of a friend, on whose fidelity she reposed herself; she is therefore fallen into devotion, goes no more to spectacles, and play is defended at her house. Though she affects a mortal serious, I observed that her eyes were of intelligence with those of Sir James, near whom I had taken care to plant myself, though this is always a sacrifice which costs. Sir James is a great sayer of nothings; it is a spoiled mind; full of fatuity and pretension; his conversation is a tissue of impertinences, and the bad tone which reigns at present has put the last hand to his defects. He makes but little case of his word, but as he lends himself to whatever is proposed of amusing, the women all throw themselves at his head. Adieu.

Miss H. More to Mr. Walpole.

London, April, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

I propose to live between London and Hampton (I do not mean at Brentford) all the merry month of May. The first week in June I think to pass in Kent, at Mrs. Bouverie's, and the second at Fulham, at the Bishop of London's. This is the *geography* of my adventures for the next six weeks. As for the *history* of them, no page will be so pleasant as that of which the running title will be *Strawberry Hill*. Mrs. Garrick and I will keep Tuesday se'night clear for the agreeable day you are so good as to offer us. I did not feel so much gratified in reading the poem, marvellous as I think it, as I did at the kindness which led you to think of me when you met with any thing which you imagined would give me pleasure. Your strictures, which are as true as if they had no wit in them, served to embellish every page as I went on, and were more intelligible and delightful to me than the scientific annotations in the margin. The author is indeed a poet, and I wish with you that he had devoted his exuberant fancy, his opulence of imagery, and his correct and melodious versification to subjects more congenial to human feelings than the intrigues of a flower-garden. I feel like the most *passionate lover* the *beauty* of the cyclamen or honeysuckle, but am as indifferent as the most *fashionable husband* to their amours, their pleasures, or their unhappiness.

Dr. Percival sent me an essay on the sensibility of plants; but if I were to listen to these amiable but romantic philosophers, I should lose one of my greatest pleasures, and should no longer think that wearing a nosegay was a "venial delight unblamed;" but be filled with alarm lest every rose and pink I gathered might make a multitude of widows and orphans. Seriously, one cannot care for the weal or wo of plants; and while one reads with admiration such fine verses, one cannot help wishing that they related the history or analyzed the passions or manners of men and women, the only people whom, after all, with all their faults, I take any great interest.

I hope the western wind (*my* great physician) has carried away your shocking cold. I was glad of the success of Gen. Conway; though I have long since become totally indifferent to the fate of any play. The loves of our modern heroes and heroines have caught hold of my affections almost as little as the *loves of the plants*. Indeed, they are little more than vegetable loves,—as vapid as spiritless; while the old comedies shamefully offend in another way. I could dilate with much *skill and ingenuity*, but that I know you would scold me, so I am obliged to stifle a vast many *good things*. Of your *answerer* I had not heard; and though I think that is by no means the criterion of popularity, yet I very much doubt whether the Earl of Anglesea's grandson will wear greener laurels than those he is furbishing up for his ancestor: at least, his entering the lists as champion for the Duke of Newcastle teaches me what value to set on his critical powers. I do, indeed, feel most anxiously, now the moment of deciding the fate of Africa is at hand! I was delighted the other day with a new pamphlet on the subject, in which the author applies Dante's inscription over the Inferno to a slave-ship—

Per me si va nella citta dolente,
Per me si va ne l'eterno dolore,
Per me si va tra la perduta gente.

H. M.

From H. More to her sister.

London, April, 1789.

I did fully intend writing a line on Wednesday, to have told you of the glorious and most promising opening of the great cause of the abolition in the House of Commons, but I could not find one moment's leisure, we had so much meeting, writing, and congratulation. The Bishop of London fully intended to be the first to apprize me of this most interesting intelligence, and accordingly got up so early as to write me a note at seven in the morning; but Lady Middleton forestalled him by writing on Monday at midnight. Pitt and Fox united can do much; "the Douglas and the Percy both together are confident against

a world in arms." The moment I finished my last, Lord Amherst came himself to fetch me to dinner, and there was no such thing as making *gold stick* wait, so I was obliged to break up my little chat with Mr. Raikes rather suddenly, who had called upon me a few minutes before. In the evening Mrs. Bates sung all her finest things most exquisitely. It was a very high treat. The constitutional ball for the king's recovery turned out the best and pleasantest thing of the kind ever known. All was loyalty and joy; and for once, magnificence did not murder cheerfulness. Old Willis supped at a little table with Pitt and two or three others, and was almost worshipped. To-morrow we go out of town for a week, to live among the lilacs. How I shall enjoy both the lilacs and the leisure! I spent the other evening in a society that would have pleased Patty,—only a little talking party, every person in which was foreign except the gentleman and lady of the house and myself. There was almost the whole corps diplomatique, and we did not speak a word but *parlez vous* the whole night. I have declared, that if they take me in so again I will not come even to their English societies. I have been to-day with the Duchess of Argyle and her daughters; the duchess desired I might be introduced to her. Alas! the sight of her is a better antidote to vanity than whole volumes of philosophy, for there are no traces of that beauty which so few years ago enchanted mankind. We begin to be all anxiety, now the great slave question comes so near the moment of decision. Pray desire our abolition friends to read an excellent pamphlet by Mr. Burgess of Corpus. I was in a large party one evening, showing a section of the African ship in which the transportation of the negroes is so well represented, to Mr. Walpole, &c., when, who should be announced but Mr. Tarleton, the Liverpool delegate, who is come up to defend slavery against humanity. I popped the book out of sight, snapped the string of my eloquence, and was mute at once.

From the same to the same.

London, 1789.

I do not send you an account of the procession to St. Paul's, as you have seen it in the papers. The poor soldiers were on guard from three in the morning: I would willingly relinquish all the sights I may see this twelvemonth, to know they had each some cold meat and a pot of porter. I was troubled too about the six thousand charity children, but the bishop assures me they had each of them a roll and two apples. I was very much affected at the sight of the king. The mob was very joyful, but rather too temperate in their acclamations, which is said to have proceeded from a fear of overpowering the king's feelings. It was singular enough that the king should issue a proclamation, commanding every-

body to go to church, and then exhibit a procession, to put it absolutely out of every one's power. I believe I could have got to the planet Jupiter as easily as to a church.

The King of France has written so very kindly to the king on his recovery, and behaved so handsomely, that the queen and princesses are to be at the French ambassador's gala; an honour never before paid to anybody. I now begin to think there has been quite enough of singing, and dancing, and lighting, and eating, and drinking on this joyful occasion, and cannot help thinking with the lady in Comus, that we "praise God amiss." I begin to want to see this very important blessing recorded by some public act of pious munificence and charity.

It is sometimes diverting, though sad, to see how party triumphs over probity. I was on Saturday at a very great dinner at Lord Somers's, and could find out the party principles of each one of the company, only by his saying how the king looked, and what degree of attention he gave to the service. I went to a private concert at Lord Exeter's; Mrs. Bates sung; I was much pleased. I must not forget to say that the most caressed person at this assembly was Dr. Willis, whose rosy face looked *so* happy. Mr. Wilberforce and the whole junto of abolitionists are still locked up at Teston; they are up *slaving* till two o'clock every morning; and I think Mrs. Bouverie told me they had walked out but once in the three weeks they had been there. While I was at Sir C. Middleton's the other night, came in a copy of the Evidence before the Privy Council, just printed; it was the thickest folio I ever saw. Well might the Commons desire a week's suspension of the business to read it. I have invited myself to Mrs. Montagu's May-day saturnalia* next year, unless I should be engaged by that time to dine with a party of free *negroes*. I have a little book sent me from Paris,—a very eloquent and ingenious Eloge on Rousseau, by Mr. Necker's daughter, Madame de Staël. I was much acquainted with the Neckers when they were in England, but their daughter was not then *come out*.

From the same to the same.

London, May, 1789.

Mr. Wilberforce and his myrmidons are still shut up at Mrs. Bouverie's, at Teston, to write; I tell them I hope Teston† will be the Runnymede of the negroes, and that the great charter of African liberty will be there completed. It is well that Fulham is so near, so that the bishop will be within reach to forward the work. The fate of Africa now trembles in the balance. On Friday I gratified the curiosity of many years by

* Mrs. Montagu always gave an annual dinner of roast-beef and plum-pudding to the chimney-sweepers on May-day, in the court before her house, Portman-square.

† Mrs. Bouverie's seat in Kent.

meeting at dinner Madame la Chevaliere d'Eon; she is extremely entertaining, has universal information, wit, vivacity, and gayety. Something too much of the latter (I have heard) when she has taken a bottle or two of Burgundy; but this being a very sober party, she was kept entirely within the limits of decorum. General Johnson was of the party, and it was ridiculous to hear her military conversation. Sometimes it was, *Quand j'étois colonel d'un tel regiment;* then again, *Non c'étois quand c'étois secrétaire d'Ambassade du Duc de Nivernois;* or, *Quand je negociois la paix de Paris.* She is, to be sure, a phenomenon in history, and, as such, a great curiosity. But *one* D'Eon is enough, and *one slice of her quite sufficient.*

I am expected at Rosedale,* at Teston, and at the Bishop of London's, but have given no definitive answer, because I do not think I can contrive to see them all. I fear there will be great opposition to the abolition in the Lords. I dined with a party of peers at Lord Ossory's, and there was not one friend to that humane bill. I sat two hours in the evening with Mr. Walpole, who had a pleasant little party. Among others, Frederick North, a very agreeable and accomplished young man; so learned, so pleasant, and with so fine a taste! To-night I go to a little supper at Mrs. Damer's, and to-morrow I take my leave of the pomps and vanities of this town, and go to Fulham Palace. I shall stay a week with the bishop, from thence I shall go, if possible, for a few days to Mrs. Boscawen, and from thence to Teston.

From the same to the same.

Fulham, June 4, 1789.

On Sunday we breakfasted at half-past seven, and went to London to hear the bishop at St. Paul's, where he preached and administered the sacrament. In that great space, his clear voice sounded as loud and distinct as in his own pretty little chapel, where he again performed the service in the afternoon; so you see he does not think his dignity gives him a privilege to be idle. I left the sweet and amiable society at the palace with regret. The bishop desired a great many compliments to you, and is determined to come to Cowslip Green. The Bishop of Salisbury and Mrs. Barrington were with us a little, and I had hard work to fight off their kind invitation to Mongewell: the present plan is for me to stay here till Tuesday.

Wednesday evening.—I close this letter from Mrs. Boscawen's, at Rosedale, sitting in the very seat where Thomson wrote the Seasons.

In the month of June, Hannah More was again settled for some time at Cowslip Green, except a visit she seemed to have

* Mrs. Boscawen's villa at Richmond.

paid to Salisbury Palace; and during this interval the following correspondence took place.

Miss H. More to Mr. Walpole.

Cowslip Green, June, 1789.

How you do scold me! but I don't care for your scolding, and I don't care for your wit neither, that I don't, half as much as I care for a blow which I hear you have given yourself against a table, though you were above mentioning it. I have known such very serious consequences arise from such accidents, that I beg of you to drown yourself in the "Veritable Arquebusade." Now to exculpate myself from the heavy charges you bring against me. I had left Fulham before the bishop had finished the botanic garden; so it was *he* who returned you the poem without a scrap of a letter, and not *I*, or you would not have been let off so cheaply, I can tell you. As to the other charge, of not sending you *Bonner's Ghost*, I declare it is one of the most creditable things I know of myself; for I protest, with singleness of heart, that it proceeded from no worse motive than my very humble opinion of it. It was struck off at a heat; and I will honestly confess, that the day it was written I had some such presumptuous design, but when that first ardour of vanity (which, I am ashamed to own, too often attends the moment of composition) was cooled, I had not the courage to send it to you. But now that you write so encouragingly (though you abuse me), I cannot bear that you should have them copied by any other hand than mine. I send this under cover to the Bishop of London, to whom I write your emendations, and desire they may be considered as the true reading. What is odd enough, I *did* write both the lines so at first, but must go *a tinkering* them after: my first thoughts are often best,—I spoil them afterward. I do not pretend that I am not flattered by your obliging proposal of printing these slight verses at the Strawberry press—but what shall I say? I gave the most unequivocal proof that I thought them good for little when I did not send you a copy—and to *multiply* copies! but do not fancy I am not aware of the distinction you offer to bestow on this trifle. You must do as you please, I believe. What business have *I* to think meanly of verses you have commended? Only remember this, *I* should never have printed them. If you are resolved to do them so much honour, I think I will stipulate for a small number. Twenty or thirty I am sure are more than I shall ever give away, and who knows but you would have the goodness to send a few to the bishop, to save the poor lame verses the fatigue of travelling so far backwards and forwards.

I have not time to be half as pert as I intended, but I live ten miles from the post, and that you should think I neglected

to obey you for *one* post would not sit so easy upon me. I hope you have lost all remains of that tedious gout; there is never any such thing as knowing from your letters whether you are sick or well, because you never complain, even when I have afterward found that you have written in great pain. Adieu! dear sir, I cannot help being, for all you use me so ill,

Your faithful and obliged,

H. More.

From the same to the same.

Cowslip Green, July, 1789.

You will think me a great brute and savage, dear sir, for not having directly thanked you for your letter, till you have read my *pièce justificative*, and then you will think I should have been a greater brute and savage if I had; for the very day I received it, a very amiable neighbour, coming to call on us, was overturned from her phaeton into some water, her husband driving her; the poor lady was brought into our house to all appearance dying; I thank God, however, she is now out of danger; but our attendance day and night on the maimed lady and the distressed husband banished poetry from my thoughts, and suspended all power of writing nonsense. I am glad, however, the faculty was only suspended, not destroyed. I was so frightened, I thought I should never be foolish again, and I am now, since all is safe, as much disposed to be so as if I had never been frightened. You cannot imagine how proud I shall be to issue from the press of Strawberry Hill, a distinction which "*was meant for merit, though it fell on me.*" Few things have happened to me from which I shall derive a pleasanter feeling. I am unwilling, methinks, to set it down to so beggarly a motive as sheer vanity; that may be an *accessory*, as the scholars would say, but I do not allow it to be the *principal*. No! to be sure, I would not have my *name* inserted on *any* account. I desire you will never exercise your power over me to make me do a wrong thing, for fear I should consent with as little remorse as I have now shown to do a *foolish* one; for if any one had said to me, "You will let these verses be printed within a month," I should have replied, Nothing in the world shall induce me to do it. But then you know I could not tell that I should be assailed in that quarter, where the shame would be not to be vulnerable on the side of gratitude, friendship, and sensibility for kindness. I hope you will not be angry with me, but I am clear about *not* printing a second edition. I should certainly never have printed a first *myself;* so your very scrupulous conscience may be at rest, for you will do me a great honour, without impairing my profit. *I* shall have all the honour of coming from the Strawberry press, be the profit whose it may. I am so deeply involved in treasons, that I cannot extricate myself out of one without getting into another. I

now feel the truth exemplified of the danger of a first sin, and how inevitably it leads to others. I am almost as far gone in delinquency as the friends of poor ——, but not quite,—there are gradations in guilt, and I have not reached its acmé; but if I go on as prosperously as I began, it is hard to say to what a pitch of profligacy I may not attain. Had I never been guilty of treachery, of betraying your letter to the Bishop of London, I never should have dreamed of doubling the enormity by exposing his to you: I shall become an adage of deceit, and if the next generation should ever hear of me at all, it will be because the present will have converted me into a proverbial phrase; and to say, as faithless as Hannah More, will sum up every idea of female fraud and duplicity. However, I am not of that worst order of criminals whose iniquity is without temptation from others, or profit to themselves. I know the violent and not quite unfounded suspicion that both women and authors lie under, especially when both meet in one of secret and invincible vanity. Now, said I to myself, and wisely was it said, if I swear till I am black in the face, that the idea of printing these silly verses was suggested by Mr. Walpole, and not by myself, this good bishop will never believe me; I have but one way of proving my virtue, which is by committing a vice; I must violate my faith to vindicate my humility, I must betray my friend to justify myself: so with this fine reasoning, worthy I trow of Ignatius Loyala himself, did I venture, though with remorse proportioned to the enormity, to send him your letter. And now as to the motive why I betray the bishop as I betrayed you, how else should I convince you of the desire he has to have the pleasure of being more known to you?

My poor sick friend makes but little progress towards recovery. I cannot guess when she will be able to leave the house, or even her bed. My spirits are sadly harassed, and need such pleasant letters as I get from Strawberry Hill, and such sort of places. I hope you are quite well, and after a letter of so much levity, let me end with a serious truth, that I remain, with every sentiment of regard, my dear sir,

Your ever obliged and faithful
Humble servant,

H. More.

From the same to the same.

Cowslip Green, July 27, 1789.

My dear Sir,

Though I know that the only part of bestowing a kindness, or conferring a favour, to which you have any objection, is the being thanked for it, yet the kindness and honour you have bestowed on me is so flattering in itself, and so graceful in the manner, that if you *will do* obliging things, you must even be

contented to put up with all the disagreeable consequences, and submit to be thanked for them very heartily, and very sincerely. But (as I am determined to comply with your humour in something) it shall be at least very briefly, but believe me I feel as much as those who would say more, and better. Your bountiful parcel is arrived. That such light, thin, impassive, unsubstantial beings should travel in the same envelope without hurting one another is no wonder, having neither bone to bruise nor flesh to be bruised; but if the gentry in the mail-coach had suspected they were travelling in company with sixty-four ghosts, and as many gothic castles, what terror and dismay would they have felt. I am quite enchanted to see my poor base metal bear the stamp and impress of Strawberry Hill, whose gothic towers and air of elder time so agreeably keep up the idea of haunted walks and popish spirits.* And then your printing is so nice, and your paper is so magnificent, I did not think even *you* could have found out a way to make my verses look so pretty. I am delighted with the little brown Bonner. It is so new and so old, and so whimsical, and so unique! in short, to borrow Mrs. P——'s elegant and favourite phrase, "It is so comical somehow, there is no telling." Nay, I am in imminent danger of falling in love with my own verses, for I look at them, and admire them as if they were any other *body's*—Madame P—— again! You see I stand a good chance of adopting all her pretty colloquial familiarities; bu as I am aware that I shall never be half so knowing and so witty, I do not see what right I have to pretend to be as barbarous and as vulgar. I hope, however, *you* will confess that she has great strength of intellect, if I allow that she has rather too much of the worst property of strength, which is coarseness.

I fear I shall secretly triumph in the success of my fraud, if it has contributed to bring about any intercourse between the Abbey of Fulham and the Castle of Otranto. It sounds so ancient and so feudal! But among the things which pleased you in the episcopal domain, I hope the lady of it has that good fortune; she is quite a model of a pleasant wife. Now I am acquainted with a great many *very* good wives, who are so notable and so managing that they make a man every thing but happy; and I know a great many others who sing, and play, and paint, and cut paper, and are so *accomplished* that they have no time to be *agreeable*, and no desire to be useful.

Pictures, and fiddlers, and every thing but agreeableness and goodness, can be had for money; but as there is no market where pleasant manners, and engaging conversation, and Christian virtues are to be bought, methinks it is a pity the ladies do not oftener try to provide them at home. I return you many thanks for the ghosts you have been so good as to disperse in your neighbourhood. How charming it is when one

* The Poem was embellished with a neat engraving of Strawberry Hill.

has such a creditable pretence for so frequently recurring to one's self, or one's verses, which is the same thing. I used to wonder why people should be so fond of the company of their physician, till I recollected that he is the only person with whom one dares to talk continually of one's self without interruption, contradiction, or censure; I suppose that delightful immunity doubles their fees. I seem to have forgotten that *you* are not *my* physician, and that you will get nothing by me.

Your ever obliged,

H. More.

From Mr. Walpole to Miss H. More.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 9, 1789.

You are not very corresponding (though better of late), and therefore I will not load the conscience of your fingers much, lest you should not answer me in three months. I am happy that you are content with my edition of your ghost, and with the brown copy. Everybody is charmed with your poem; I have not heard one breath but of applause. In confirmation, I enclose a note to me from the Duchess of Gloucester, who certainly never before wished to be an authoress. You may lay it up in the archives of Cowslip Green, and carry it along with your other testimonials to Parnassus.

Mrs. Carter, to whom I sent a copy, is delighted with it. The bishop, with whom I dined last week, is extremely for your printing an edition for yourself, and desired I would press you to it. Mind, I do press you; and could "Bonner's Ghost" be laid again, which is impossible, for it will walk for ever, and by day, we would have it laid in the Red Sea by some West Indian merchant, who must be afraid of spirits, and cannot be in charity with *you*.

Mrs. Boscawen dined at Fulham with me. It rained all day, and though the last of July, we had *fires* in every room, as if Bonner was still in possession of the see.

I have not dared to recollect you too often by overt acts, dear madam, as by the slowness of your answer you seem to be sorry my memory was so very alert. Besides, it looks as if you had a mind to keep me at due distance, by the great civility and cold complimentality of your letter; a style I flattered myself you had too much good-will towards me to use. Pretensions to humility I know are generally traps for flattery; but could you know how very low my opinion is of myself, I am sure you would not have used the terms to me you did, and which I will not repeat, as they are by no means applicable to me. If I ever had tinsel parts, age has not only tarnished them, but convinced me how frippery they were.

Sweet are your Cowslips, sour my Strawberry Hill,
My fruits are fall'n, your blossoms flourish still.

Mrs. Boscawen told me last night that she received a long letter from you, which makes me flatter myself you have had no return of your nervous complaints. Mrs. Walsingham I have seen four or five times; Miss Boyle has decorated their house most charmingly; she has not only designed but *carved in marble*, three beautiful bas reliefs with boys, for a chimney piece; besides painting elegant panels for the library, and forming, I do not know how, pilasters of black and gold beneath glass; in short, we are so improved in taste, that if it would be decent, I could like to live fifty or sixty years more just to see how matters go on; in the mean time, I wish my Macbethian wizardess would tell me, "that Cowslip Dale should come to Strawberry Hill," which by the etiquette of oracles, you know, would certainly happen, because so improbable. I will be content if the nymph of the dale will visit the old man of the mountain, and her most sincere friend,

H. WALPOLE.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Walpole.

Sandleford House, Sept. 1789.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have been so brutally negligent of your last favour, that you might *once* have taunted me with the proverbial reproach, that "ingratitude is worse than the sin of witchcraft;" but now that demonology, and miracles, and witchcraft are become fashionable and approved things, you must endeavour to find out a new similitude wherewith to compare my wickedness. But though I cannot bring myself to allow of the pert axiom that virtue is its own reward, I am willing enough in this instance at least to allow that sin is its own punishment; for every post I delay answering a letter of yours, so many days do I voluntarily put off entitling myself to a very great entertainment,—I mean that of getting another letter from you; so I am at least more disinterested than most criminals. But really, if I were only half as good as you sometimes abuse me for pretending to be, instead of being entirely pleased with hearing from you, I should mix a little wholesome fear with my gratification, for you not only do all you can to turn my head, by printing *yourself* my trumpery verses, but you call in royal aid to complete my delirium, by sending me a bewildering piece of flattery from a most amiable princess. You cannot imagine what a bad effect on my morals a little praise has from you great people; I swallow it with the most simple and unresisting eagerness in the world, upon Hamlet's plain principle,

"Why! what preferment can they hope from me?"

I comfort myself that you will counteract some part of the injury you have done my principles this summer, by a regular

course of abuse when we meet in the winter; remember that you owe this restorative to my moral health; next to being flattered, I like to be scolded; but to be let quietly alone would be intolerable. Dr. Johnson once said to me, "Never mind whether they praise or abuse your writings; any thing is tolerable except oblivion."

I have been an arrant stroller; amusing myself by sailing down the beautiful river Wye, looking at abbeys and castles, with Mr. Gilpin in my hand to teach me to criticise, and talk of foregrounds, and distances, and perspectives, and prominences, with all the cant of connoisseurship, and then to *subdue* my imagination, which had been not a little disordered with this enchanting scenery. I have been living in sober magnificence with the Plantagenet Dowager-duchess at Stoke, where a little more discretion and a little less fancy was proper and decorous; and then I have had Mrs. Montagu at my cottage, and then I have had Mrs. Garrick, and then I have had Mr. Wilberforce; so that with all my fantastic dreams of hermitage and retreat, *and a place to retire to be melancholy in*, any thing less like a hermit, or more like a dissipated fine lady, you cannot easily conceive. And now I am at Mrs. Montagu's in Berkshire, where are Gothic windows, and Grecian wit, and British oaks, and which (if Mr. Wyatt ever has the kindness to furnish it, which I doubt) will at last be really a fine place, though rather characterized by fine parts than a good whole: but among Mrs. Montagu's best possessions I reckon her niece, who is here, sensible, discreet, and accomplished, and not (at least not *yet*) spoiled by the world, though a great fortune.

Poor France! though I am sorry that the lawless rabble are so triumphant, yet I cannot help hoping some good will arise from the sum of human misery having been so considerably lessened at one blow by the destruction of the Bastile.* The utter extinction of the Inquisition (unless the fire is only sleeping under the ashes and not wholly quenched), and the redemption of Africa, I hope yet to see accomplished; and when I shall have seen these three great engines of the Devil crushed, demolished, exterminated, my greatest wishes on this side heaven will be gratified: and even then there will be fully as much natural and moral evil left in the world as one's heart can wish, without these stupendous and elaborate inventions, to aggravate the misery of mankind by mountains of sin, by masses of calamity. If I knew one human being who more cordially than yourself joins with me in wishing to see the world a little happier than it is, I would have uttered my complaints to him, and not to you; but I believe it would have been more to the credit of my philosophy not to have uttered them at all. Unluckily, however, I have not in me one atom of that stuff out of which philosophers are made. I want to

* She soon saw that this was only the beginning of crimes.

know if you have biographized the new noble author, who I think will figure in your hands, after having renounced the turf for the fathers. I hear he has just written a catechism.

It is really abusing the permission given me to be impertinent to run on thus without wit or shame. The last of these qualities, however, does begin to operate, and I will say no more; but that I cannot say how much I am, my dear sir,

Your ever obliged

H. M.

From Bishop Porteus to Miss H. More.

Monk's Walk, four in the morning, 1789.

DEAR MADAM,

Had I the good fortune to be a papist and a sprite, I would send you in return for an exquisite little poem (which I received a few posts ago) the prettiest copy of verses in the world; for no one, I do affirm, writes such delicious poetry as the *Ghost of a Popish Bishop*. But as I am unluckily nothing more than a *live Protestant monk*, it is impossible for me (encumbered as I am with flesh and bones, and other corporeal impediments) to soar so high into the regions of fancy, wit, and taste as those light aerial beings, who are all intellect and spirit, and have not a single gross earthly particle about them to retard their flight, or cloud their imagination. Perhaps, too, there is something in your *beloved* popery peculiarly favourable to poetic composition; for we know that both papists and poets have a wonderful talent for fictions and marvels. For these and sundry other good reasons which I shall not specify, I must content myself at present with thanking you very heartily and very humbly in plain, dull, heretical prose, for the very great pleasure you have given us, both in person and by your pen. How far I may hereafter find myself inspired by the Monk's Walk, and Bishop Bonner's Chair, which you have immortalized by your verse, and touched with your enchanted wand, I know not; but I shall certainly never sit in the one or saunter in the other, without thinking of that entertaining poetic friend who has given importance and interest to both. Poor dear Bishop Bonner! how little did he imagine that he, who had not a grain of wit himself, should be the cause of so much in others. He, good man, in the simplicity of his heart, thought of no other amusement but that of burning heretics. He had no conception that he should give birth to any other kind of entertainment, and that two hundred years afterward he should light up in certain poetical imaginations, a somewhat purer and more innocent flame than that which he kindled in Smithfield.

My wife (O shade of Bonner! forgive that profane word!) desires me to say every thing kind and friendly for her to you,

and the beloved house of Teston; and for myself, I must say, that I am, with the most perfect truth and sincerity,

Dear madam,
Your very sincere and faithful servant,
A PROTESTANT MONK.

Miss H. More to Mrs. Carter.

Cowslip Green, 1789.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I am sure you have thought me a *perfidy* woman, to have heard nothing from me through all these long summer days, if such a cold and drenching June and July can have the face to call themselves summer; but my time has been so totally and sadly occupied since I came to my hermitage, that I have scarcely written to a friend, though my dear Mrs. Carter is in the small but beloved number of those of whom I have frequently and affectionately thought. Perhaps you know that Mrs. Montagu had the kindness to bring me down hither herself from Bristol, and bestowed on me a day which will be ranked among the pleasantest I have passed here. I have had many cheerful pleasant letters from Mr. Walpole, which prove him to be in charming spirits. You owe the handsome form in which the enclosed nonsense makes its appearance to a galanterie of his. While I was at the dear bishop's at Fulham, the trifling incident recorded in the argument happened. The bishop cut a little walk through a dark thicket, to which I gave the name of the Monk's Walk, and the subject obviously enough suggested the idea of the verses, which Mr. Walpole, by accident seeing, very much wished to print them at Strawberry Hill, a compliment too flattering for my vanity to resist; so he printed a certain number of copies for his friends and mine. I wish I could contrive to send you more than one, though perhaps you will say with Shakspeare, "a little more than a little is by much too much."

In my way down I made my long-promised visit to the Provost of Eton; of course I saw Windsor, and, strange to say, for the first time in my life! As is the common case of high and long expectation, I was egregiously disappointed, both with the castle and terrace; the first containing few monuments of ancient grandeur, and scarcely any good pictures—and the latter having few interesting objects, and little besides mere magnitude and garish extent to recommend it. I left poor Mrs. Garrick quite well and in spirits, and two days after had a letter from her, dictated by bitter affliction on the sudden death of a lovely little girl, her darling niece, whom I likewise tenderly loved. I am the more concerned at this loss, as I had hoped she would have found in this sweet girl an object to fasten her affections upon in her own family. She has so

few interesting attachments that I feel this loss for her extremely.

I know nothing of the pamphlet advertised to be printed of the size of the "Manners of the Great," except that I did not write it, and that I know nothing in the world of who did. It was advertised in such an equivocal way, that many of my friends sent for it, supposing it to be mine, and when they found it was not, advertised me to take some public notice of it; but no—if it does the slightest good, it is no matter who wrote it, or how it is written; besides, it is the humblest of all possible deceits in *any* author to wish to pass for *me*, and I would not expose anybody for such a meritorious act of humiliation.

Did you ever meet with Baron Haller's letters to his daughter, on the Evidences of Christianity? I have just read it with great pleasure, and hardly know a more important little book to be put into the hands of persons just entering into the world, where they will not fail to hear so much skeptical conversation in what is called good company. It is well written and perspicuous; the arguments apposite and level to ordinary apprehensions, and the expression sufficiently elegant.

I am almost come to the end of Gibbon. I had no other way of coming at the history of the Bas Empire but wading through that offensive and exceptionable book. I do not know whether he takes most pains to corrupt the principles or to pervert the taste of his reader. Were he to be the prevailing author, Christianity and the English language would be abolished pretty nearly at the same time; there is almost as much affectation and false taste as there is impiety and even obscenity; luckily I cannot read Greek, but those who do assure me that many of the notes are grossly indecent; I am sure that this is the case with many of those which I *can* read. I have promised to go for a week to Mrs. Montagu's about the middle of this month. Mrs. Kennicott spent nearly a fortnight at my little cottage, and accommodated herself very readily to the quiet simple life she was obliged to lead. My sisters spent their week of leisure with me. I am now a perfect hermit, enjoying complete solitude, with such casual interruptions as make a grateful vicissitude. The world is wiped out of my memory as totally as if it had never occupied me; but the remembrance of a few wise, and good, and pleasant friends lives in my heart, accompanies my walks, and embellishes my solitude. Be assured that my dear Mrs. Carter is among the very first of these, and is tenderly and constantly remembered by

Her ever faithful
H. More.

From Mrs. Carter to Miss H. More.

Eastrey, 1789.

I did indeed, my dear Miss More, think you a *perfidy* woman for not writing to me; this however I overlooked, as a human frailty. But do you in conscience think that I could with any degree of patience support your delaying to send me Bishop Bonner's Ghost, when so many people must have seen it who could not admire this exquisite little poem more, and who do not love the author half so much, as I do? I did see it, however, much sooner than you intended, by the goodness of the Bishop of London and Mr. Walpole; and now my fury being tolerably well evaporated, I will thank you for sending it to me at last: but, indeed, my dear friend, I am not really so unreasonable as to expect that when your time is so usefully and nobly employed, you should find leisure to indulge me with a letter so often as I wish to hear from you. I always rejoice in reflecting on the good you are doing to others, and on the happiness you are treasuring up for yourself; and I am contented in my own particular with a persuasion very dear to my heart, that whether you write to me or whether you forbear, you still think of me with equal kindness, and that I possess the same place in your friendship. Most sincerely do I wish and pray for success to your present most benevolent scheme of humanizing and Christianizing those poor savages of whom you give so affecting a description. You know the world too well to expect to do all the good you wish, but you will certainly do some, perhaps a great deal. At all events, the attempt is excellent, and will infallibly meet its reward. I shall long to know how your scheme goes on. Is not this most charitable work to be effected by subscription, seeing you are not personally possessed of 100,000*l.*? If it is, I beg you will allow me to contribute a little. Giving money is a very inconsiderable part of such a charity, but my wretched inactivity seldom allows me to do any thing more, and therefore I always feel it a duty to do in this instance what I can.

It gave me pleasure to find you had made some agreeable excursions in the summer. How I should have enjoyed rambling with you along the romantic banks of the river Wye! I am still happy enough to feel that youth is not necessary to the enthusiastic pleasures of imagination.

Indeed I do feel a very sincere joy in your account, that your excellent sisters, after many years so usefully spent in a fatiguing task, are going to enjoy the blessing of liberty and repose, before life is worn down to an incapacity for reasonable pleasure.

I am sure you sometimes think with compassion on the miserable situation of our poor neighbours on the Continent. Every benevolent mind would wish that all the nations of the

earth might enjoy the advantages of civil and religious liberty; yet however desirable the end, the heart sinks at a view of the present confusion and horrors with which great revolutions are usually attended. Yet so it must be, since they are most commonly brought about by bad men. The scrupulously conscientious dare not submit to such practices, nor will they condescend to use such instruments, as in the corrupted state of mankind are necessary to procure great important changes in the constitution of the moral world. Let our pride confess that it is not human wisdom, it is not human virtue, to which we are indebted for remarkable public reformations, but to the providence of God, which makes the selfish and ambitious passions of men his instruments of general good.

I fear our friend Mr. Walpole's heart has suffered deeply from the distresses of his family. Lord Waldegrave's death is a sad circumstance to his lady, to whom he was an excellent husband, and to five young children.

I hope you have got entirely rid of your toothache. As to your head, alas! I have not much better hopes than of my own. Adieu, my dear Miss More.

Ever most affectionately yours,

E. CARTER.

From the Rev. John Newton to Miss H. More.

Priestlands, Lymington, Sept. 18, 1789.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I think it probable that amphibious animals, which can live either on the land or in the water, are not equally attached to both; they remove to the one occasionally, but are most at home when on the other. Such an animal am I; the reasons for which I ought not to live to myself, fix me chiefly in London, and I would be thankful that I can make a very tolerable shift to live and breathe there; but when I now and then get leave to quit it, I think that the country is rather my favourite element. We left London the 2d instant, the next day brought us to Southampton; on the 15th we came hither, and we return to Southampton to-day. You have probably heard Dr. Stonehouse speak of *his* and *my* good friend Mr. Etty, with whom I now am: he can give you some idea of the beauty of Priestlands, and of the hermitage in which I now am writing —a task which the poverty of my descriptive talent, and the consideration of whom I am writing to, persuade me to decline. It would be a subject not unworthy of your own pen.

The Wednesday before we set out, my dear Mrs. Newton was enabled to go to church, for the first time since the end of November. She travelled with little inconvenience, and is at present tolerably, though not perfectly, well. When the year began, I had little reason to hope that either she or our dear child Miss Catlett would accompany me any more; but now

they are both with me. When we were brought low, the Lord helped us, and we still live to praise him; we are still monuments of his mercy, and proofs of his goodness in answering prayer. Happy are they who are permitted to trust in him who raiseth the dead. If we know what we ask, and our wishes are regulated by a submission to his will, we cannot expect too much from the God that made heaven and earth, and has set them constantly in our view as an encouraging specimen of his wisdom, power, and goodness.

I hope you received my printed sermon. I sent it to the Adelphi, but heard afterward that you had left London before I was aware. The importance, the critical season, and the suddenness of the king's recovery offered an occasion almost sufficient to make, as we say, the stones speak. I could not be silent. I preached three sermons on the event, and printed the last a month after the thanksgiving-day on which it was preached; some reasons induced me to publish it—though at the time I had no intention to do so; and therefore, not having written a syllable, I was obliged to apply to my recollection for the substance of what I had delivered. The hand and providence of God was generally acknowledged, and some confessions of this kind extorted even from infidels; but I was willing to lead the thoughts of my hearers and readers to him with whom we expressly have to do,—to the God who manifests his glory in the person of Jesus Christ, by whom he exercises all power and authority in heaven and earth. This truth, that individuals, and families, and nations, and things are under the administration of him, who his own self bare our sins in his own body upon the tree, is the very life of my soul, the foundation of my hopes, and of all that deserves the name of religion; without it, all appears to me dead, uncomfortable and unfruitful. No scheme of religion can afford me relief but that which is accommodated to the state of the unworthy helpless sinner, who needs multiplied forgiveness and continual supplies; having nothing of his own but evil and misery.

Oh! had it been left to me when I first perceived my wretchedness to devise a way of escape, and to consider how he on whom I could venture to trust must be qualified, in order to be able to save me to the uttermost, I must have been utterly and for ever at a loss. But, blessed be God, I found the great desideratum settled and provided for me to my hand; and that Jesus, as revealed in the gospel, was exactly the very Saviour I would have wished for, had I known how. My case required great compassion, that could pity the most obstinate and rebellious; great power, to subdue the most inveterate habits of wickedness, and to protect me from dangers which I could neither foresee nor prevent, and from legions of enemies with whom I was quite unable to cope. It required likewise some very valuable and important considerations to satisfy me how it could be consistent with the justice and holiness of God to

afford mercy to such a wretch as I. But in what the Scripture teaches of the person, the offices, the love, the sufferings of the Son of God, I have found enough to silence every doubt, to obviate every difficulty, to banish every fear. So that if my faith and actual experience were but equal to the views my judgment has formed upon these points, I should be the happiest creature alive; and should go on singing with the apostle to the end of my days, and even in the midst of tribulation, "If God be for us, who can be against us? it is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen, ascended, and is making intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

But alas, madam, too often my judgment and my experience differ almost as much as the knowledge we obtain of a country by looking on a map differs from that which is acquired by travelling through it. Though the Lord has in mercy opened my eyes, I cannot see without light, and this light is not in myself. I depend upon an agency which I cannot command, but which I can, and do, too often grieve. In proportion as this influence is suspended or diminished, I revert again into my original self, and all my supposed knowledge is as useless as the figures and gnomon of a dial when the sun no longer shines. To this it is owing that I am such a riddle to myself, such a medley of inconsistencies and contradictions, that I would and would not, that I can and cannot, that I do what I hate and neglect what I desire; that it has so often been a point of deliberation with me whether I should please God or man, that I can so glibly write before breakfast of my obligations to the Saviour, and yet possibly, before dinner, feel myself in such a situation as to be almost ashamed of owning my attachment to him.

Oh, if the world, with all its blandishments, or with all its scorning, was to come upon me sometimes, I think I should know how to give it an answer. But there are seasons when I find myself a very coward, and then, if I were not secretly upheld by Him from whose cause I am basely shrinking, I should actually throw down my arms and quit the field.

Well, I hope it will not always be so. Indeed I do not expect any reason to think better of myself while I am here. My mortal frame, like the leprous house, is so deeply infected that it is incurable; the timber and the stone must be taken down. I hope I wish to live as becometh a saint, but, after all, I must be content and thankful to die as becometh a sinner, crying for mercy, and only looking for it on account of him whom I have pierced. But there is another and a better state, when I hope to be all eye, all ear, all heart towards him who loved me, and gave himself for me. Then may we meet and behold his glory, and praise him for ever.

But if we live, I hope to meet you first at No. 6 Coleman-street Buildings, when you return to London, which we hope will be

about the second of October. With a tender of Mrs. Newton's and Miss Catlett's best respects,

I remain, dear madam,
Your affectionate and obliged servant,
JOHN NEWTON.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Walpole.

Cowslip Green, Sept. 2, 1789.

MY DEAR SIR,

I do aver (and a modest asseveration it is) that I am much more amiable, and worthy, and grateful than I appear to be, I mean in the single article of friendship; and though I do not pretend to have *quite* reached sinless perfection even in that article, yet are my delinquencies on that head more involuntary than on any other. Besides, the *abolition* of such a gainful traffic as our correspondence is to me, where, as Lord North says, the *reciprocity is all on one side*, would be such a loss to me as no other literary merchandise I can engage in could possibly repair. Yet, though it is so much my interest, as well as my pleasure, to be good, it is certain that nothing can be much worse than I appear to be; but I have lately had so much business on my hands (not writing, believe me) that I think I have not written a single line for mere pleasure or friendship these six weeks. Your project for relieving our poor slaves by machine work is so far from wild or chimerical, that of three persons deep and able in the concern (Mr. Wilberforce among others) not one but has thought it rational and practicable; and that a plough may be so constructed as to save much misery: but I forget that negroes are not human, nor our fellow-creatures; but allowing the popular position that they are *not*, still a feeling master would be glad to save his ox or his ass superfluous labour and unnecessary fatigue. I am grieved to find by a letter from Mrs. Boscawen (for I should never have learned it from yourself) that you have had another attack of the gout. I found a little alleviation to this unpleasant intelligence, by comforting myself that your two fair wives were within reach of your elbow-chair, and that their pleasant society would somewhat mitigate the sufferings of your confinement. Apropos of two wives—when the newspapers the other day were pleased to marry me to Dr. Priestley, I am surprised they did not rather choose to bestow me on Mr. M——, as *his* wife is probably better broken in to these eastern usages than Mrs. Priestley may be. I can account for this absurd report I think. Being one day in a large company, who all inveighed against Lindsey, and Jebb, and other Socinians who had deserted the church because they could not subscribe to the Articles, I happened to say that I thought sincerity such a golden virtue, that I had a feeling bordering on respect for such as had apostatized upon principle; for when a man gave such an unequivocal

proof of his being in earnest as to renounce a lucrative profession rather than violate his conscience, I must think him sincere, and of course respectable. I have ever since been accused of rank Socinianism, and the papers soon after married me to Priestley, though I reprobate his opinions. I never saw him but once in my life, and he had been married above twenty years.

I am edified by your strictures on the French distractions. These people seem to be tending to the only two deeper evils than those they are involved in; for I can figure to myself no greater mischiefs than despotism and popery, except anarchy and atheism. I could find in my heart to forgive Louis Quatorze all the spite I owe him, if he could know that the throne of the grand monarque has been overturned by fisherwomen! What a pity too that Vertot is not alive! that man's element was a state convulsion; he hopped over peaceful intervals as periods of no value, and only seemed to enjoy himself when all the rest of the world was mad. Storm and tempest were his halcyon days. As he was a man of some piety, I wonder he never wrote the history of Adam's fall. Alas! in sober sadness, how much nobler a quarry for his tumult-loving genius would the defection of the whole human race from God and goodness have been, than the small game of such petty revolutions as states and empires. Adieu, my dear sir, treat me not as I deserve, but according to your own nobleness: in the former case I should hardly hear from you before I may hope to see you; in the latter I shall be relieved from an anxiety about your health, which will be always an interesting subject to,

Dear sir,
Your ever obliged and truly grateful,
H. M.

From the same to the same.

Bristol, Nov. 8, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

I this instant received your very kind letter, and cannot refuse myself the gratification of assuring you of my warm and hearty sympathy with your most affecting illness and losses, and especially on the touching fate of that excellent, interesting Lady Waldegrave. I have been so long buried at Cheddar, a wretched obscure village in the lower part of Somersetshire, among more want, misery, and ignorance than any I had supposed to exist, and where I hope to be made an humble, though unworthy, instrument of being a *little* useful, that I had not so much as heard of Lord Waldegrave's death when I wrote to you my last trifling letter, which I then thought was nothing worse than foolish, but which, the instant I heard of the distress you were in, struck my imagination as

light and unfeeling, and turned into a crime that which I only meant as a folly. I do indeed admire the sweet resignation and heroic piety of this afflicted lady. My heart aches to think that your anxieties on her subject are far from being at an end: never was so pitiable a distress. I pray God to spare her to her children. I am truly sorry that your confinement, grievous enough of itself, should be aggravated by these distressing circumstances. I do admire the Duchess of Gloucester for remaining in the midst of these woful scenes: how few do so!

I am going to-morrow to spend the week with the Duchess of Beaufort, at Stoke. As to the tragedy you inquire about, I hear it is a very poor performance, without plot, character, or interest. There are, I dare say, some pretty passages in it, but all seem to bring it in guilty of the crime of dulness, which I take to be the greatest fault in dramatic composition. I heartily thank you, dear sir, for your friendly cautions about what you call the Constantinopolitan jargons, but believe me, I am in no danger; you yourself have hardly a higher disdain of the narrow spirit, the contracting littleness of party in religion. I deplore the separating system and the sad bigotry which have split the Christian world, and made the different sects, like the teeth of Cadmus, destroy one another as fast as they spring up. But indeed this is not the spirit of Christianity, which is all love and peace.

Dare I intrude upon your goodness so far as to beg the favour of you to send a copy of Bonner's Ghost to Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Walsingham, and our friend Mr. Batt? If you will be so good as to send them in your own name, it will bestow some consequence on them, and you will deduct them from the portion you so generously assign me. If I thought my excellent friends Lady Juliana Penn or Mr. Pepys were *very* near you, I should be intrusive enough to swell the catalogue of your troubles. Adieu, my dear sir; with great regard believe me,

Yours, &c.
H. More.

From the Rev. Richard Cecil to Miss H. More.

1789.

Dear Madam,

I feel myself under great obligation to you for your last obliging letter, though I have been so long in answering it. Certain it is that I should have been very glad to have *seen* you; but after that, you conferred the next highest favour; and whether you believe it or not (for people live in the world till they learn to refer almost every thing to *finesse*), yet I do declare that my not writing to you before was owing to the indisposition I felt to tease and occupy one so well em

ployed, so much addressed, and, I fear, so often indisposed by sickness.

Still, interest, the god of this world, drives us all to our point; and though you certainly disappointed me in my expectation last time, I thought I would try again. I had formed a design of seeing with your eyes, and hearing with your ears (observe, I do not say speaking with your tongue, for that I never thought of), and with such assistance I expected my *second* edition would be worth notice. When, lo! I received some kind and complimentary remarks, without a single alteration proposed, or a defect pointed out, though I see several to be ashamed of. Now, my dear madam, to make me amends (for I do insist upon it you did not use me well), do, as soon as you find it convenient, tell me what I must add, and what I must remove from the enclosed tract, which I am forced to send you coverless, on account of its weight.

I must honestly confess to you, that when I heard from Mr. Hoare lately that you were pretty well, I wrote to Mr. Grant to inform him, among other things, of this, and to beg he would use his endeavours to bring you forward at a time which seems to demand uncommon exertions in the cause of truth and righteousness, and exertions too of a particular kind. I hope he will succeed, and that directly.

My own mind is frequently tossed about in the view of present affairs (I mean of a religious kind, for I pay but little regard to politics); sometimes I despond, at other times I am for pursuing, then again I sink, till I take up the Bible, or go into the sanctuary and see the end of these men, and the stability of divine truth. I feel also that a Christian must be a man of faith every step of the way, and one whom the world knows not, though he so well knows the world. But what signifies my saying these things to you?

Let me say, however, since I can say it with so much sincerity and pleasure, that I present my kindest and most respectful regards to each of the ladies whose obliging attentions I received at Cowslip Green, and that I remain, with the highest esteem,

Your much obliged friend
and humble servant,
R. Cecil.

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

Portman-square, Sept. 1789.

I suppose my dear Miss More has given me up long ago as dead and buried; but, indeed, though I have been buried, I have not been dead, nor in any degree cold or insensible to her, but all alive to her merits and perfections; nor can I ever forget or cease to love them, till I have drunk of the oblivious lethe. Why, then, you will say, did I not answer your charm-

ing letter? Why not thank you for the happy days you gave me at Sandleford? But do not I tell you I have been buried? ghosts walk and haunt the places and the persons in whom they took delight, but bodies thrust into the earth cannot do so. Your letter found me sore beset with little cares—I was then preparing for my northern expedition; many orders I had to give, many directions to inculcate. I said to myself, therefore, I shall have a more perfect enjoyment of my friend's correspondence when I am not in all this bustle and embarrassment, with a mind divided between the place I am leaving and that to which I am going; so I will not write till I am settled in Northumberland. But, alas! when I got there, I was a captive to worldly cares, and perfectly buried in coal-pits, and I returned only five days ago to upper day and our great metropolis. I know you will be glad to hear that my health has rather been improved than impaired by my northern expedition. I found our dear Vesey weak and low. I suppose Mrs. Garrick informed you I passed some days in her sweet place and charming society before I set out for Northumberland. Under the direction of the northern star, I went to Lady Spencer's, at St. Alban's, and from thence to Mr. Smelt's, in Yorkshire; with Lady Spencer I staid but a short time, engagements in the north urging me to go forward; but in the short time I did stay, I had the highest satisfaction, that of seeing her continually employed in relieving distress, soothing affliction, and administering comfort to every species of misery. Her ladyship had the goodness to carry me to see some remains of the great Lord Bacon's seat at Gorhambury. With much reverence did I enter a fine gallery, which was his chosen place for study and contemplation: I considered it as consecrated to wisdom and the sciences, but was presently awakened from my enthusiastical pleasure, by being informed that, the building being decayed, Lord Grimston, the present owner, was going to pull it down—is going to demolish Lord Bacon's study! Oh! ye daughters of memory, will you suffer it? Oh! Minerva, goddess *of wisdom*, will you endure it? The thought sticks in my throat and chokes me; and I can say no more, only that I did not recover my spirits until I got to Mr. Smelt's, where I saw virtue and wisdom happy: but perhaps the place his taste has embellished, and his virtues adorn, will, in the course of a century, lapse to some foolish Florio or wretched miser. All the things of this world are of a changeable and perishable nature; however, my dear madam, let not this thought cast a gloom on your cottage on Cowslip Green, which, while you inhabit it, will be admired and respected as the abode of the virtues and the Muses. Your bower is worthy to receive, and delightful enough to retain, the Red Cross Knight;* but, to our infinite regret, he made a very short visit at Sandleford. I hope he

* William Wilberforce, Esq.

did not consider it as *Error's den.* I have had a beautiful engraving of the verses on Bonner's Apparition in my memory ever since I first saw them; and the frontispiece of Strawberry Hill which you have sent me has made the matter complete, and I return my sincere thanks for the favour. I beg of you to present my best respects to the Duchess of Beaufort when you go to Stoke. I wish I could be of your party. I beg my affectionate compliments to all your sisters; and pray put a great deal of gratitude into those you present for me to Miss P. More. I beg that if Mrs. Chatterton continues ill, you will give her a guinea for me, which I can repay, but cannot all your goodness and favours (though sincerely felt) to, my dear madam,

Your much obliged
and faithful servant,
E. MONTAGU.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Salisbury Palace, 1789.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I do remember with gratitude your kind injunction to me at parting, to give you a few lines about my insignificant self. I trust you arrived as prosperously at your station in the east as I did at mine in the west; from which tranquil station, however, I was soon seduced by the prevailing rhetoric of the lord and lady of this episcopal palace. I was not aware, however, it was such a bustling period, or I should have contrived to make my pilgrimage to the shrine of Sarum at a quieter season, for we have great dinners, and concerts, and oratorios, it being the music meeting. At their evening amusements, however, they are so good as to dispense with my attendance, and they are all gone to the festivity of the night, having left me solitary queen of this venerable palace. Indeed I had but too plausible a pretence for keeping close, having suffered a painful and perilous extraction of a tooth since I came hither; and here I am sitting with an original picture of Henry Lawes, the friend of Milton, and the composer of Comus, looking down upon me, very angry I suppose, though he does not tell me so, at the disrespect I pay to his art, in deserting all this fine music; while I am much more sorry at not being able to explore, in many a sauntering revery, the gothic elegance of this beautiful church, and to prune the ruffled wing of contemplation in its sober cloisters. The bishop has very judiciously taken down an impertinent wall, which prevented the cathedral from standing in his garden, and the effect has amply repaid the labour. I purpose, nothing dismayed, to encounter the two extremes of human life, and exchange the palace for the cottage in a day or two, as I am now quite recovered.

Now the evenings are so long, I feel a comfort methinks in

knowing that you have sheltered yourself in the social and protected neighbourhood of Richmond, which at this season is so much better for you than the pretty but isolated retreat of Glanvilla.

Talking of long evenings and retreats, I took it into my head during my seclusion at Hampton last year to read through a shelf of books as they came to hand, without any choice or selection, and it was diverting to see what a mass of crudities I swallowed. It was impossible they should assimilate so as to make a good literary chyle. Take some in the order in which I read them: Devotions of St. François de Sales, Life of Spinosa, Sentiments de Piété, Cartouche the Highwayman, Fénélon, Queen Christina, Sir Thomas Brown's very learned miscellanies (and eke very obscure), his namesake Mr. Tom Brown's Letters, Life of St. Paul, Spanish novels, and the Use of Adversity, by Bussy Rabutin. I actually got to the end of my shelf, for I chose a short one, and one on which I was sure there was no poetry, which is too serious an engagement to risk without deliberation.

My dear madam, ever yours,
H. More.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss More.

1789.

Your kind letter from Salisbury Palace has afforded me information, not indeed exactly such as I could have desired; for, sober-minded as you are, you would not voluntarily have sat at home with Mr. Lawes's picture, if you could have heard such music as his and Purcell's in such company as sallied forth from your palace for that purpose. No, your health is still but poorly I fear; alas! how seldom is it otherwise.

On Wednesday I went to Caen Wood, where, I fear, I have seen Lord Mansfield for the last time; at least he appeared to me in a more suffering state of body than I have ever seen him in; only his mind remains. Lady Charlotte Wentworth was there in deep mourning, and, as Miss Murray informed me, much afflicted. You know, I suppose, though I did not, that Lady Harriet was dead as long ago as August last. Lady Charlotte inquired after you, and mentioned "Bonner's Ghost," which she had not seen, she said, though it had been, she was informed, in the newspaper; I promised I would send it to her, so I sent her my only Strawberry Hill copy, trusting to your generosity to replace it. It is true I have my own original copy in your dear hand; *that* I will not part with. I have a letter from Lady Mount Edgecombe, in which I decipher the following: "Would you, my dear friend, have the goodness to transmit to Miss More my best acknowledgments, and assure her I felt great vanity at finding myself on the list she thought worthy to possess the edifying Ghost of Bishop Bonner, which

I extremely admire; I know not how to address my gratitude to her, but through you." I think I have rendered this difficult passage exactly, *car vous connoissez les pieds de mouches de ma bonne amie.* She has had Mrs. Siddons with her. Mr. Walpole I have visited in his confinement, for he has had the gout in his knees, but, as usual, makes no complaint. Mrs. Huber, too, sends me a message for you;—I am a universal secretary to *vos obligées.* She begs me to present her best compliments to you, and to say that "but for the painful and unfortunate events, both private and public, that have happened here, I should long ago have returned her thanks for the charming letter she had the goodness to write to me." Both these my employers write incomparably well, all but the characters, which are indecipherable; so that you are better off in falling into my hands than theirs. *Au reste,* speaking of the Comte de Mirabeau, she says that "it is hardly possible to form an idea of the mixed sentiments of horror and admiration he inspires; that there hardly lives such a monster of immorality, or a man of greater abilities and eloquence. Have not all countries one such?

Here is not a lord or gentleman who can give one a frank. Lord Onslow is gone into Surrey; but I wish you had seen his lordship last week enter my room in triumph. "Here, madam. I have brought you something that you are worthy to see, you will be so delighted with it; Mr. Walpole has given it to Lady Onslow; and I ran away with it, vowing Mrs. Boscawen should see it this minute; so read it, and I will wait to carry it safe back again; it is charming." All this, delivered with as much eagerness as kindness, I heard in silence; and then reaching to the shelf at my elbow (for Bishop Bonner is never far off), I showed him the gothic pile which adorns the frontispiece, and much he marvelled that I should possess such a treasure. Adieu, dear friend. F. B.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Carter.

Palace, Salisbury, October 1, 1789.

MY DEAR MRS. CARTER,

I do insist upon it that punctuality of correspondence must never be made the test of affection, for no two things ever bore less proportion to each other than the sincerity of my love and the frequency of my letters to you. It is lucky for the peace of my conscience that I have not your last kind letter by me to reproach me by its date. But I have led a sad sort of vagrant life lately, and vagabondism is not very compatible with regularity of any sort. In the first place, I took a ramble with my excellent and pleasant friends Mr. and Miss Wilberforce (after they had bestowed some time on me at my cottage) through Monmouthshire; and we sailed down the pleasant and picturesque river Wye, enjoying at once the benefits of improving conversation, and the charms of the most beautiful and interesting scenery. We deplored the ruthless hand of war, which had

dismantled castles; and we contemplated abbeys which the mouldering hand of time would have mellowed into more affecting beauty, had the zeal of reformation confined itself to opinions and principles, and not vented its undistinguishing fury on stone walls and pillars and windows. Your own charming verses on a similar subject leave nothing to be said, as they are tender and beautiful in a high degree.

Of the ten days I staid at Sandleford, five were devoted to most unrelenting headaches; and the intervening five, instead of being employed to redeem the inaction of the others, were passed in pleasant airings, &c. I left Mrs. Montagu quite well.

I am at present on a visit to our excellent friends the Bishop of Salisbury and Mrs. Barrington; Mrs. Garrick is of the party; she made a visit to my cottage from her head-quarters at Bath, where she has been some time drinking the waters, not having been quite well this summer. I should be charged with the kindest remembrances of our whole society, did they know I was writing to you, but they are all gone to an oratorio. I declined going, as I have long since given up public places, which neither suit my taste nor my health.

My *whole* time, however, has not been devoted to such idle pursuits as travelling and visiting; I am engaged in a work in which I am sure I shall have your hearty prayers and good wishes. You will, I dare say, mistake the word *work*, and think it is some literary vanity; but no, *le voici*. A friend of mine and myself, having with great concern discovered a very large village, at many miles' distance from me, containing incredible multitudes of poor, plunged in an excess of vice, poverty, and ignorance beyond what one would suppose possible in a civilized and Christian country, have undertaken the task of seeing if we cannot become humble instruments of usefulness to these poor creatures, in the way of schools, and a little sort of manufactory. The difficulties are great, and my hopes not sanguine; but *He* who does not "despise the day of small things" will, I trust, bless this project. I am going directly down to my little colony, to see what can be done before winter sets in. My long absence at that period will be a grievous circumstance.

I know your good and benevolent heart will receive pleasure at hearing that my sisters are preparing to retire at Christmas from their anxious and laborious employment, to enjoy, I hope, a little leisure and peace after a busy and, I trust, not unuseful life. Adieu, my dearest Mrs. Carter, God bless you. Always your very faithful and sincerely obliged HANNAH MORE.

Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Cowslip Green, 1789.

MY DEAR MADAM,

What a pleasant letter did you write me, and how delightful your anticipated account of the Paris celebrity. Do

not you think Dr. Price's sense and intelligence seem to have nodded, as his prudence has often done, when he talks of the omnipotence to be obtained by a union of the two countries, in his long prelude to his short toast. I desire to embrace all mankind as my brethren, and cordially wish all kingdoms, nations, languages, and individuals were united by the ties of human affection and of Christian charity; but how these great ends can be brought about by throwing off all restraints, religious and moral,—by tumbling down all subordination, private and public,—by talking of philanthropy and acting with cruelty,—by introducing the laws and maxims of a little beggarly Greek republic into a vast, populous, and corrupt empire, —I cannot imagine.

I cannot say I am at all delighted with the new volume of Dr. B——: indeed, after having read four or five of the sermons, I desisted, and left his showy desert for the nourishment afforded by more solid divines. I know I am broaching a very unpopular opinion, but I judge as I feel, and not as I hear. The second discourse, for instance, on sensibility, will I think be better relished by young ladies from the boarding-school than by serious persons. It appears to me to contain principles not so evangelical as one should expect from so experienced a divine. I think he very injuriously prefers complexional feeling to those right actions which are performed by people of a sober character purely from a sense of duty. Is not this setting the virtues of the constitution above the Christian graces, and preferring that goodness which proceeds from a kindly combination of the elements to the difficult exertion of religious principle? I do not scruple to say that such divinity revolts me, but it will make the book acceptable to many. Sensibility appears to me to be neither good nor evil in itself, but in its application. Under the influence of Christian principle, it makes saints and martyrs; ill directed or uncontrolled, it is a snare, and the source of every temptation; besides, as people cannot get it if it is not given them, to descant on it seems to me as idle as to recommend people to have black eyes or fair complexions: but I did not intend to say a word of all this; I wanted to discourse to you about your many pleasant neighbours, but have left myself but little room. I hope to hear Mr. Walpole's gout has left him, for though I desired him not to write, I am very anxious to learn how he does. I imagine my excellent friends at Fulham are returning. I had a charming letter from the bishop, enclosing his admirable charge. I am sure you are delighted with it. I am, on the whole, better than usual,

And ever yours,
H. More.

CHAPTER V.

At the close of the year 1789, to which our narrative has now brought us, an interesting event occurred, which prepared the way for Hannah More to execute the intention she had long formed, of gradually withdrawing herself from general society, and indulging in a closer intimacy with those whose religious sentiments were congenial with her own. Her four sisters had enabled themselves, by their prudence and assiduity, to retire from their task of education with great credit, and in affluent circumstances. The letter which follows records a very pleasing testimony to the great respectability and solid worth of these excellent ladies.

From Dr. Horne to Miss H. More.

Canterbury, 1789.

Dear Madam,

I most sincerely wish the Misses More all the happiness in their retirement which retirement can give: and much is it able to give to those who, like them, carry into it a consciousness of having, for so many years, well discharged the duties of an employment most useful and important to society. May they have raised up a succession of *daughters*, who may prove hereafter firm in principles as *corner-stones*, to support the honour of their respective families; and in accomplishments, *polished after the similitude of a palace.* And for yourself, madam, go on, by your writings and conversation, to entertain and improve the choicest spirits of a learned age, and show them how glorious it is to reflect on all around us the light that falls on our own mind from that sun which never goes down, but will burn and shine on for ever, when the luminaries of the firmament shall be extinguished, and the created heaven and earth shall be no more.

With repeated acknowledgments for all your kind attentions to my dear girl, I am, with true esteem and regard, dear madam,

Your much obliged and
faithful humble servant,
Geo. Horne.

Previously to their taking this step, Miss More and her three sisters had built for themselves a house in Great Pulteney-

street, Bath,* and between this residence of their own and the retreat at Cowslip Green they were in future to divide their time. For some years Hannah More had been cherishing the hope of devoting herself in her little retirement to meditative and literary leisure, and to planting and improving the scene around her; but there was no rest for her but in the consciousness of being useful. She carried into all places and scenes a mind teeming with a tender concern for human happiness, which would not allow her to look upon life and its great and lasting interests without earnest wishes to be used as an instrument in the work of grace upon the soul, and the extension of the Saviour's kingdom. Having seen much of time mispent and opportunities abused among the gay and great, she had taken up her parable and proclaimed the truth through good and evil report, in high places, where the tempter trusted to have reckoned her among his votaries; and finding in rural life and the peasant's cottage the same crimes, in other forms, disfiguring the moral scene, and intercepting the prosperity of the rising generation, she could not, though feeble in frame, withhold herself from taking an active part in the instruction of the poor population around her; and in every good work she undertook to promote, her talents and zeal soon made her the leader and directress. During the summer of this year she passed with her sister Martha more than was usual with her at Cowslip Green, whence they had made occasional excursions to the villages for some miles round, particularly to Cheddar, a distance of ten miles, so famous for its romantic scenery. In the course of these little rambles, finding the poor in their neighbourhood immersed in deplorable ignorance and depravity, they resolved to supply their spiritual wants. For this purpose they set about estab lishing, without delay, a school for the instruction of the poor of Cheddar, which in a short time included nearly three hundred children; and it soon appeared, that from the prejudice against educating the poor which at that time prevailed in many quarters, the neighbourhood upon which this vigorous aggression upon ignorance and barbarity was begun was by no means exempt. Many of the opulent farmers patriotically opposed the innovation; one of them observing, that the country in which the ladies were introducing this disturbance had never prospered since religion had been brought into it by the monks of Glastonbury. To find proper masters and mistresses for their purpose appeared to be their greatest difficulty, but by their patient and unwearied attention in qualifying persons for the office, they at length surmounted this and every other impediment.

Some of the letters of Miss More at this period, which are

* It is a singular circumstance, that all the four houses in which they resided were built by themselves, and in not one of them had death disturbed their happy union, till at the end of fifty years they lost their eldest sister.

very interesting, and present a pleasing picture of her incipient plans for instructing the children of the poor, are here offered to the reader.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

George Hotel, Cheddar, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

Though this is but a *romantic place*, as my friend Matthew well observed, yet you would laugh to see the bustle I am in. I was told we should meet with great opposition if I did not try to propitiate the chief despot of the village, who is very rich and very brutal; so I ventured to the den of this monster, in a country as savage as himself, near Bridgwater. He begged I would not think of bringing any religion into the country; it was the worst thing in the world for the poor, for it made them lazy and useless. In vain I represented to him that they would be more industrious as they were better principled; and that, for my own part, I had no selfish views in what I was doing. He gave me to understand that he knew the world too well to believe either the one or the other. Somewhat dismayed to find that my success bore no proportion to my submissions, I was almost discouraged from more visits; but I found that friends must be secured at all events; for if these rich savages set their faces against us, and influenced the poor people, I saw that nothing but hostilities would ensue; so I made eleven more of these agreeable visits; and, as I improved in the art of canvassing, had better success. Miss Wilberforce would have been shocked, had she seen the petty tyrants whose insolence I stroked and tamed, the ugly children I praised, the pointers and spaniels I caressed, the cider I commended, and the wine I swallowed. After these irresistible flatteries, I inquired of each if he could recommend me to a house; and said that I had a little plan which I hoped would secure their orchards from being robbed, their rabbits from being shot, their game from being stolen, and which might lower the poor-rates. If effect be the best proof of eloquence, then mine was a good speech, for I gained at length the hearty concurrence of the whole people, and their promise to discourage or favour the poor in proportion as they were attentive or negligent in sending their children. Patty, who is with me, says she has good hopes that the hearts of some of these rich poor wretches may be touched: they are as ignorant as the beasts that perish, intoxicated every day before dinner, and plunged in such vices as make me begin to think London a virtuous place. By their assistance I procured immediately a good house, which, when a partition is taken down and a window added, will receive a great number of children. The house, and an excellent garden of almost an acre of ground, I have taken at once for six guineas and a half per

year. I have ventured to take it for *seven years*,—there is courage for you! It is to be put in order *immediately*; "for the night cometh:" and it is a comfort to think, that though I may be dust and ashes in a few weeks, yet by that time this business will be in actual motion. I have written to different manufacturing towns for a mistress, but can get nothing hitherto. As to the mistress for the *Sunday*-school, and the religious part, I have employed Mrs. Easterbrook, of whose judgment I have a good opinion. I hope Miss W. will not be frightened, but I am afraid she must be called a Methodist.

I asked the farmers if they had no resident curate; they told me they had a right to insist on one; which right, they confessed, they had never ventured to exercise, for fear *their tithes should be raised*. I blushed for my species. The glebe house is good for my purpose. The vicarage of Cheddar is in the gift of the Dean of Wells; the value nearly fifty pounds per annum. The incumbent, a Mr. R——, who has something to do, but I cannot here find out what, in the university of Oxford, where he resides. The curate lives at Wells, twelve miles distant. They have only service once a week, and there is scarcely an instance of a poor person being visited or prayed with. The living of Axbridge belongs to the Prebendary of Wiveliscombe, in the cathedral of Wells. The annual value about fifty pounds. The incumbent about sixty years of age. The prebend to which this rectory belongs is in the gift of the Bishop of Bath and Wells. Mr. G. is intoxicated about six times a week, and very frequently is prevented from preaching by two black eyes, honestly earned by fighting. Mr. —— is a middle-aged man; of his character they know nothing. The curate, a sober young man. Love to Miss W.

Your much obliged

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

Cowslip Green, 1789.

My dear Friend,

It happens very unluckily that *both* of us should so partake of the nature of ghosts that *neither* of us care to speak till we are spoken to; and that though we are of a sex famous for loving to have the *last* word, it should be so difficult to make us pronounce the *first*.

I *have* read Paley's new book, and think the Evidence he adduces so strong that it would carry him through a court of judicature. It is very pleasant to see the truth of Christianity receive an accession of strength from such collateral circumstances. You talk as if I lived in the world, and knew what passed in it. You should have told me what it was about. I did not know Mr. Burgess had published a sermon; but I will inquire for it, for he is one of the young clergy of

whom I think particularly well. Some of his compositions are at present my chief study; not, however, those which procure admiration, or gain fame: for the Salisbury Spelling Book and the Parochial Exercises are those which at present attract my attention. I have been ferreting about these two months among the neglected villages of this hardly Christian country, to find out those places which are particularly destitute of religious advantages; and have fixed on the central parish of six large ones, which have not so much as a resident *curate*, for the principal scene of my operations. I have hired an old vicarage house, which has had no inhabitant these hundred years; and in this I propose to place some pious and knowing people to instruct the poor, who are more vicious and ignorant than I could have conceived possible in a country which calls itself Christian. The vicar, who lives a long way off, is repairing the house for me; and as he is but ninety-four years old, he insists on my taking a lease, and is as rigorous about the rent as if I were taking it for an assembly room. It will take some time to put this in order, but next Sunday we are to open a smaller school, a sort of detachment from these head-quarters; and as all these villages are from six to ten miles' distance from me, you will believe I am not a little engaged. I am not apt to be very sanguine in my expectations; but I comfort myself by remembering that we have nothing to do with *events;* and, indeed, the uncommon prosperity we have at Cheddar ought to encourage us: we have a great number there who could only tell their letters when we began, and can already read the Testament, and not only say the Catechism, but give pertinent answers to any questions which involve the first principles of Christianity; but then the ability and piety of the teachers we have there, surpass what we can expect to find again. I should not enlarge on these little circumstances so much to anybody else; but I know you like these Goody-two-shoes details; besides, if there were any merit (I hate the popish word) in these little schemes, it is not mine; for I have little money, and if I had much, I should, too probably, spend it as those who have a great deal commonly do. I know myself too well to blame others much.

Poor Patty has had a wretched summer; in almost constant pain; she desires to be kindly remembered to you, as do the whole sisterhood: they are all in the little thatched cottage, and we cultivate roses and cabbages, *con spirito*. The Bath house is promised to be ready by Michaelmas; you are absolved from secrecy on that head. But whenever I leave my hermitage, it will be with regret. I am made for this quiet dull life, and have almost lost all taste for any other.

If you are still at Mongewell, pray present my best respects to the excellent lord and lady of that pleasant mansion.

Yours, most affectionately,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

Cowslip Green, 1789.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I intended to have answered your little shabby letter immediately, though you did not deserve it; but I had at the time so violent a rheumatic pain in my head and face as to make me unfit for every thing. The horrible operation of tooth-drawing has partly relieved me, and large doses of James's powder I hope will complete the cure. As to my adventures, they have been neither numerous nor brilliant. I have never stirred out of the "Cowslip's Bell" since I crept into it; and it is with sorrow and regret I find the time approaching when my sisters will expect me to join them at Bath. I hate Bath. They are all there furnishing the new mansion, except your sentimental friend, who is with me enjoying our quiet cottage. She too has had the same disorder, rheumatism in her head, for some weeks, but happily we have never both been confined together, so that one at least has been able constantly to superintend our now large and extensive concerns. We have often agreed that

"To mend the world's a vast design;"

and I am now convinced of the truth of this, by the difficulties attending the half-dozen parishes we have undertaken. It is grievous to reflect, that while we are sending missionaries to our distant colonies, our own villages are perishing for lack of instruction. We have in this neighbourhood thirteen adjoining parishes, without so much as even a resident curate. I am deeply convinced how very poor and inadequate any miserable attempts of mine can be to rectify so wide-spread an evil; yet I could not be comfortable till something was attempted. We have therefore established schools and various little institutions, over a tract of country of ten or twelve miles, and have near five hundred children in training. As the land is almost pagan, we bring down persons of great reputation for piety from other places, and the improvements are great for the time. But how we shall be able to keep up these things with so much opposition, vice, poverty, and ignorance as we have to deal with, I cannot guess. I should not enter into these details, but I know you expect an account of what I have been doing.

As soon as all my plans are completed here, I purpose going to Bath, that is, towards the end of this month, if not sooner starved out by the thin-walled cottage. I think I shall drink the waters *till after Christmas at least*, if I should have the good fortune to escape coughs; which, however, I have no right to expect.

I suppose you will not write these two years at least. I had a low-spirited letter lately from Mrs. Carter, who seems much hurt by the wickedness and extravagance of a relation. I grieve she should have any thing to grieve her. I wish I knew with whom you are; for if it is with somebody I know and like, I should be glad to say something kind to them.

I think Dr. B——'s third volume a very poor thing, much inferior to the others in point of composition; and so far are they from evangelical, that I think some of the sermons even go on a false principle; but do not betray me, for I know his popularity, and one must have lived very little indeed in the world not to know the cause of it too. But when one grows pert, it is time to conclude. Patty sends her love.

Yours affectionately,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Carter.

Cowslip Green.

My dear Mrs. Carter,

It is a pity that you and I should both of us have so much of obstinacy in our disposition as not to speak till we are spoken to. I cannot, however, any longer resist my inclination of inquiring how you do, how your spirits are, and whether that naughty head of yours is as adverse to your comfort as ever? These are questions in which I am truly and deeply interested, though, from my delaying so long to propose them, you are not bound to believe it. I thank God I am, upon the whole, as well as usual; indeed rather more free from coughs. Poor Patty is still a grievous sufferer, the rest tolerably well, and all of us together cultivating my pretty little garden, and enjoying many blessings. The house at Bath is in great forwardness, and nearly ready for us.

Our friend Mrs. Garrick, who is still at Bristol Wells, has been to see us several times; she does not think herself quite recovered. To those who have enjoyed, during a long life, sound and perfect health, illness is particularly alarming. Let you and me, my dear friend, number our infirm health among the merciful providences which have been dispensed to us. How much more do we enjoy our intervals of ease than those who know no pains; and I hope we may be enabled to turn the pain itself to good account. "All things work together for good to them that love God."

I know nothing of Mrs. Montagu. From our dear bishop, to whom I shall enclose this, I have just received a most pleasant letter. I think his charge written with great spirit and seriousness. I do not wish him so ill as to desire to see him bishop of *this* diocess, but I do wish for some salutary interference among the clergy of this neighbourhood. While we are sending missionaries to India, our villages are in pagan dark-

ness, and upon many of them scarcely a ray of Christianity has shone. I speak from the most minute and diligent examination. I have been constantly occupied this whole summer, in trying what my poor abilities, and my small influence over others, richer and better, can bring about. In one particular spot, for instance, there are six large parishes without so much as a resident curate. Three commonly-gifted curates cannot serve eight churches. Through the kind assistance of a friend or two, I am endeavouring to fix schools and other little institutions in the most destitute of these places, and as they are from six to ten miles distant, you will judge that it employs a good deal of my time. I have the satisfaction to tell you that Cheddar, our first establishment, goes on most prosperously. We have a great many children in that parish only, and by the ability and piety of our teachers, their improvement surpasses my warmest hopes. I make no apology to you, my dear friend, for the freedom of these details. Alas! there are so few to whom one *can* speak or write on such subjects, that in conversing with *them* one makes one's self amends for the silence one is constrained to observe towards the world in general.

I wish you could see my *roses*. I have a double end in such a wish, for then I should see *you*. I am truly and faithfully, my dearest Mrs. Carter,

Your affectionate and sincere
H. More

From Miss More to Mr. Wilberforce.

I joyfully accept the honourable office of your almoner, on condition that you will find fault with and direct me with as little scruple as I shall have in disposing of your money. Patty is very proud at being admitted into the confederacy, and at being appointed superintendent of Cheddar; a title, however, she will only hold by delegation in my too long absences, for I like my dignity too well to allow her to be more than *vice*-queen.

What a comfort I feel, in looking round on these starving and half-naked multitudes, to think that by your liberality many of them may be fed and clothed: and Oh, if but one soul is rescued from eternal misery, how may we rejoice over it in another state, where perhaps it may not be one of our smallest felicities that our friendship was turned to some useful account in advancing the good of others, and, as I humbly presume to hope, in improving ourselves for that life which shall have no end.

Mr. H. T—— I think belongs to the Society of Sunday-schools in London, for assisting necessitous villages with books, &c. There cannot be a fairer claim on them than the present. If you and he approve it, perhaps we may apply for

a quantity of New Testaments, Prayer-books, and little Sunday-school books, with a few Bibles. The sooner we get them the better, otherwise you or he will be so good as to order a supply from the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, to which I do not belong, or I would send for them. They may be directed to Park-street.

I am terribly afraid of lying under the slander of being *sentimental* and *prosing*, but indeed I hope you will never have such another long letter from me: you know, however, it is your *own* business.

I hope the waters agree with you, and that Miss W. is not too much oppressed by multitudes. Pray assure her of the sincere affection of her and

Your ever obliged
H. More.

From the same to the same.

Cowslip Green.

Dear Sir,

With my usual bias in favour of this world, I have been diligent about the manufactory, and negligent of the mission; indeed I have some hope of the one, and but little of the other, at least in the cold way of regular practice. I find that spinning *linen* is a starving employment: a woman must add great skill to great industry to get one shilling and sixpence per week; whereas the same exertions will enable her to get near three shillings by spinning wool. Now it strikes me that it would be profitable and pleasant if they could be taught to spin the worsted for their own knitting; and I have found out a manufacturer whom I hope I shall prevail upon to buy the stockings; but as they will probably spin a great deal more material than they can use, I must find another who will take the yarn when spun. My hasty, undigested notion, which you will correct, is this, that we must provide a house for a school, and (what will be still harder to get) a knowing, industrious, religious woman. If she should have a husband with the same qualities, so much the better; as in that case he could teach the boys to spin and read, and the woman the girls. Now I should humbly propose to give these people (the master and mistress) house-rent, coals, candles, and a certain salary, to instruct both men, women, and children at the school; but as soon as the *women* are instructed, that *they* should then have the wheels in their own houses, where they can be more useful; the children still continuing at the school. I think if we give them the wheels, their instruction, and a certain portion of yarn to waste till they have acquired the art perfectly, then the manufacturer should be the employer: I mean that he should find the wool, pay for the spinning, and take the yarn or stockings at a certain price.

Having the profits of their own labour will encourage them; and being obliged to produce so much will keep them in order. I can get wheels for spinning wool for about four shillings and sixpence each; if that is somewhat dearer than in Yorkshire, perhaps the difference of carriage may make it nearly equal.

I am, my dear sir,
Your most obliged
H. More.

From the same to the same.

Cowslip Green, Oct. 14.

My dear Sir,

I should not trouble you so soon with a line in answer to yours, if it were not to save you more trouble. I take very kindly your friendly sympathy and attention, in proposing to look out for an assistant to us in our operations, but I write on purpose to beg you not to think of it. An ordinary person would be of no use; one of a superior cast, who might be able to enter into our views and further them, would occasion an expense equal to the support of one or two more schools. At present we rub on pretty well. It will be time enough to think of your scheme when I am quite laid by. This hot weather makes me suffer terribly, yet I have now and then a good day; and on Sunday was enabled to open the school. It was an affecting sight. Several of the grown-up youths had been tried at the last assizes; three were the children of a person lately condemned to be hanged;—many thieves! all ignorant, profane, and vicious beyond belief! Of this banditti we have enlisted one hundred and seventy; and when the clergyman, a hard man, who is also the magistrate, saw these creatures kneeling round us, whom he had seldom seen but to commit or to punish in some way, he burst into tears. I can do them little good, I fear, but the grace of God can do all. Your friend Henry T—— thought we ought to try.

I have just had a letter from the Bishop of London expressing the most gloomy apprehensions as to our public prospects. Captain Bedford writes me there is scarcely an officer in the fleet who does not reprobate the Quiberon attempt, and all subsequent attempts on the coast.

Yours, dear sir,
Most sincerely,
H. More.

P.S.—Have you never found your mind, when it has been weak, now and then touched and raised by some very trifling circumstance? So I felt on Sunday. The principal people from many parishes came to the opening of this scheme for the instruction of this place, which is considered as a sort of Botany Bay. Some musical gentlemen, drawn from a distance

by curiosity (just as I was coming out of church with my ragged regiment, much depressed to think how little good I could do them), quite unexpectedly struck up that beautiful and animating anthem, "Inasmuch as you do it to one of the least of these, you have done it unto me." It was well performed, and had a striking effect.

We will now enter upon the series of letters to her sister Martha, which introduce her to us in the year 1790, on her usual visit to Mrs. Garrick.

From H. More to her sister.

Hampton, 1790.

Mr. Walpole has given me two guineas for our poor man who was cut down after he had nearly hanged himself. I have written to Mr. Hare to continue his allowance, and still to endeavour to impress his mind with a sense of religion, and repentance of his crime. I have got an extract of Mr. Fraser's evidence before the committee of the House of Commons—*le voici*. "I was on shore with my linguist for the benefit of my health. He conducted me to a spot where some of the countrymen were met to put a sucking child to death. I asked them why they murdered it? They answered, because it was of no value. I told them that in that case I hoped they would make me a present of it; they answered, that if I had any use for the child, then it *was* worth money. I first offered them some knives, but that would not do; they however sold the child to me for a mug of brandy. It proved to be the child of a woman whom the captain of our ship had purchased that very morning. We carried it on board, and judge of the mother's joy when she saw her own child put on board the same ship; *her child*, whom she concluded was murdered. She fell on her knees and kissed my feet." In what light does this anecdote place this detestable trade!

I think very often with concern of poor Yearsley's situation. I could get a famous medicine which has done wonders, if you can contrive to find out if she would take it; but I suppose the poor creature would be afraid to take any thing of my recommending. Perhaps Mr. B—— could contrive to inquire without naming me. I should be happy to relieve her, and no time should be lost. I am much concerned for the loss of good Bishop Halifax, who has left a wife and seven or eight children. This is the second Bishop of St. Asaph, *both* my friends, who have died within the year.

From the same to the same.

London, March 4, 1790.

We came to town on Thursday night. I kept close on Friday, to try to qualify myself for a town life. On Saturday I dined at Mrs. Montagu's, with fourteen people, and went in the evening to meet Lord and Lady Dartmouth; perhaps you may think this was enough for one day, but I was obliged after this to call in at London House, where I found many of my good friends, who received me with great kindness, which, had I been rich, or great, or wise, or witty, might have been feigned, but being neither, I believe to be sincere.

As to improving upon the Cheddar scheme, I have thought it over soberly and coolly. Surely no harm can arise from giving leave to such parents as desire to hear their children instructed, to come in the evening, and be instructed themselves. We will at first limit the number; as to the time, an hour will be quite sufficient; more would break in upon the children's time, and take parents too long from their own families. They are so ignorant that they need to be taught the very elements of Christianity. Speak to Mr. Forster the clergyman on the subject; he is disposed to be obliging and kind: he must see that it will enable them to understand his sermons better at church, and will bring more people there. On Monday Mrs. Boscawen fetched me to dine with her, and was so kind as to put off going to a concert where she was engaged, that I might sit the evening with her, which I did in my bonnet, snug. Lady Mount Edgecombe made me a long call, and detailed all the particulars of the royal visit.

To the same.

March 20, 1790.

And so the Emperor Joseph and Mr. Howard are both called in the same week to give in their final account. I want Mrs. Montagu to write a dialogue in the shades between these two persons. Her talents would make it entertaining and instructive: the difficulty would be to give it a Christian cast. And I want another dialogue between those two murderers on a great scale, Charles V. and Louis XIV., which would introduce the causes of the present state of their respective countries. I want also a dialogue of a gayer kind, the interlocutors to be Bishop Wilkins and Dean Swift, the one with his wings, the other with his laputa.

Things are getting worse and worse in France. A lady of quality the other day in Paris rung her bell, and desired the footman to send up her maid Jeannotte. In vain she rung and rung; the man told her Jeannotte refused to come, or be any longer under anybody. At last Jeannotte walked into the room with a pamphlet open in her hand, and sat down. The lady,

astonished, asked her what she meant. "*C'est que je lise,*" said Jeannotte, without taking her eyes off the book. The lady insisted on an explanation of this impertinence. The maid replied with great sang froid, "*Madame, c'est que nous allons tous devenir egaux, et je me prepare pour l'egalité.*" I have conceived an utter aversion to liberty according to the present idea of it in France. What a cruel people they are! A duel was to be fought between two gentlemen a little way from Paris; it was heard of, and people went to it as to a party of pleasure: the account added, *il y avoit trente whiskeys remplis de dames.*

To the same.

London, April, 1790.

At Mrs. Montagu's, the other day, I met Mr. Burke and a pleasant party; indeed he is a sufficiently pleasant party of himself. There was also Mr. Mackenzie (the Man of Feeling), which determined me to go.

As to London, I shall be glad to get out of it; the old little parties are not to be had in the usual style of comfort; every thing is great, and vast, and late, and magnificent, and dull. I very seldom go to them, and always repent when I do. The old are all growing young, and seventy dresses like seventeen. Plenty of reading here, but not quite time for it. Five volumes of Bruce's Abyssinia on the table. You know he was suspected, but I believe falsely, to have told a thousand extravagancies in these travels.

I rejoice our dear friend Horne will be the new bishop. I have not been so much vexed for a long time, as at Sir Charles Middleton's resignation of the comptrollership. They would not consent to help and forward his excellent plans of reform in that important branch of the government, and an honest man does not feel happy in a situation where he sees a great deal of good to be done which he is not allowed to do. I am going to dine with Mrs. Boscawen; the duchess is just come to town, and presents her daughter. How I pity a sober woman who has a daughter to present to this dissipated world.

To the same.

London, April 25, 1790.

You will see by the enclosed notes that the Red Cross Knight (a name Mrs. Montagu gives to Mr. Wilberforce, after Spencer's Knight of Holiness) and I have spent a comfortable day together at the Middletons'. Yesterday I dined with the Montagues, and passed the evening in Portman-square. She is fitting up her great room in a superb style, with pillars of verde antique, &c., and has added an acre to what was before a very large town garden. Still the same inexhaustible spirits, the

same taste for business and magnificence; three or four great dinners in a week with Luxembourgs, Montmorencies, and Czartoriskis. I had rather, for my own part, live in our cottage at Cheddar. She is made for the great world, and is an ornament to it; it is an element she was born to breathe in. We have spent our Easter at Hampton in delightful quiet, suited to the solemn season. Breathing a pure air for a few days has somewhat set me up. Though I think my last winter has not been so bad on the whole as the two preceding ones, yet I have had such a succession of coughs that I yielded to the importunity of Mrs. Boscawen, and sent for Dr. Pitcairn. I told him I did not send for him to cure a cold, but to have a conversation with him about my general health; that he must *do as they do in France;* that is, discard palliatives, and give me a new constitution.

This year Miss More published a volume entitled "An Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable World." It was bought up and read with the same avidity as its predecessor, "Thoughts on the Manners of the Great." In this essay she animadverted in a bolder strain on the same prevailing corruptions, though more in detail; on the decay of domestic piety, and especially on the absence of religion from the education of the higher classes.

Tracing the want of moral restraint to its true source—the prevailing indifference to vital religion, she brought her charges so home to the experience and conviction of her readers, as to make many a Felix tremble, and to touch the consciences of many who were sitting at their ease in self-righteous complacency. The Spectator had the address beyond all the works that went before it to gain an audience for religion in the societies of the vain, the unthinking, and the unstable; but then it was religion in a compromising form, modified at least, if not unchristianized, to please the trifling and conciliate the unhumbled; but the challenges of Hannah More penetrated the proudest and gayest resorts, and surprised and shamed the votaries of fashion in their full career, without giving to truth either drapery or disguise to qualify or conceal its awful realities. Hers was the solitary case in the whole history of man and his anomalies in which severe and sober truth was enabled to make its way through all the obstacles of habit, interest, and prejudice, without art, or stratagem, or machinery. She went forth with her sling, and her pebbles from the pure brook, and fought and triumphed. Her clear understanding had no other ally than the sanctity of her cause; and by her honest and vigorous efforts the whole reading world, and a large part of the idle world, were constrained to listen and confess, while she told them, in fearless language, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The manner in which one-half of the Sunday was spent, even by many who made a conscience

of going to church on the other, was an evil which she saw increasing, and which, from the example of the great, had more and more infected the lower orders.

As a proof of this deterioration, she often mentioned what she had heard from some of her older friends, that when Bussy, the French minister at our court, was ordered to leave London instantly, he was forced to delay his departure, because no wagon would stir on a Sunday. In this little work she insisted more strongly on gospel motives, as the only foundation of a Christian life. She had often mourned over that spirit of worldliness which some of her amiable and benevolent associates did not perceive to be incompatible with real religion. She saw, and felt, and loved much that was good in them, yet perceiving the tone of her piety to be lamentably low, her conscience would not allow her to rest till she had so far overcome the natural gentleness of her temper, and her unwillingness to give pain, as thus to bear her public testimony to the truth. Not that she appears to have been sanguine in her hopes, or thought highly of her own powers; but she acquitted herself of what appeared to her to be a duty, and left the event to God. This is the substance of her own account to a friend. We find that within two years "the Estimate" had reached a fifth edition.

The reader will find interspersed among the following letters many interesting and lively remarks, on this publication principally, and on other subjects.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1790.

Indeed, my dear friend, your plan of secrecy would have succeeded perfectly, and you would have been completely concealed, if giants could be concealed; but if, like Saul, you are higher than any of the people from the shoulders and upwards, you must be conspicuous; if your energy, your style, your piety is so superior, you must be discovered through all the veils that are so carefully thrown over you: *vous percez tout.* That which you intended I should hold over you I did with the utmost simplicity, according to your intention; for being asked one night at Lady Rothes's if I had seen Miss More's book, and being told it had been out four or five days, I answered I had not heard of it, nor did I believe it was Miss More's, because if it had been, Mr. Cadell would have sent it to me immediately, as he always did by the kind order of my friend,—"From the author," being written in the blank leaf; but that I had received no such book. To this plea I was answered, that I had only to read it, and I should find *internal evidence* that would leave me no doubt of the author. Thus you see the giant appeared, and so plainly, that having sent for the book

next morning, and read some twenty pages, I sent the man back for four more. A few days afterward I received the great favour of a present of a copy from the Bishop of London himself, which you may believe I value highly; but as it is already out of print till a new edition is published, I have had occasion to lend it, while I have given others to god-daughters, and have not one left.

Yours affectionately,
F. B.

From Mrs. Chapone to Miss More.

1790.

DEAR MADAM,

The same good gentleman who some time ago gave his excellent thoughts to "the Great" has again made a powerful effort for their reformation, which they receive with as much avidity as if they meant to be amended by it; indeed he has wisely recommended it to their taste by every charm and ornament of eloquence.

He has been so obliging as to send me a copy of his admirable book, and as I do not know his name and address, I take the liberty of applying to you (who are, I believe, pretty well acquainted with him, though probably not aware of half his merits), to beg you will convey to him my grateful acknowledgments for his favour, and assure him that he continually rises in my esteem, by the faithful zeal with which he lays out the talents intrusted to him at the highest interest; and I will venture to confess (gentleman though he be) that I sincerely love and honour him, and wish the most perfect success to all his laudable undertakings.

We long for you in town, my dear Miss More; hasten and enjoy the applause your lay friend has gained, and to which his own heart must bear testimony.

I am, my dear madam,
Your much obliged
and affectionate servant,
H. CHAPONE.

From the Bishop of London to Miss H. More.

St. James's-square, 1790.

Aut Erasmus, aut Diabolus, was, you know, the laconic and expressive speech of Sir Thomas More to a certain stranger who had astonished him with a torrent of wit, eloquence, and learning. *Aut Morus, aut Angelus*, exclaimed the Bishop of London, before he had read six pages of a certain delicate *little book* that was sent to him a few days ago. Such precisely was the note I was sitting down to write to you, at the very moment I received your full and true confession of that mortal

sin, of presuming once more to disturb the sweet repose and tranquillity of the fashionable world.

Indeed, my dear friend (if you will allow me to call you so), it is in vain to think of concealing yourself. Your style and manner are so marked, and so confessedly superior to those of any other moral writer of the present age, that you will be immediately detected by every one that pretends to any taste in judging of composition, or any skill in discriminating the characteristic excellences of one author from another. You have certainly taken that wise bird the ostrich for your model on this occasion, who, in order to conceal himself from his pursuers, runs his head into the sands, and though his whole body stands out behind him, is perfectly convinced that nobody can see him. There are but few persons, I will venture to say, in Great Britain, that could write such a book—that could convey so much sound, evangelical morality, and so much genuine Christianity, in such neat and elegant language. It will, if I mistake not, soon find its way into every fine lady's library, and if it does not find its way into her heart and her manners, the fault will be her own.

Mrs. Kennicott has been in town for a day, and has just called here. She means to come soon and make a little stay. Pray bring with you some "Bonner's Ghosts." Mrs. Porteus desires to be very affectionately and gratefully remembered to you—gratefully for the pleasure she received from the "*Estimate*;" for I read it to her last night, and we thought the evening as well and as pleasantly spent as if we had been at the Pantheon.

I am, dear madam,
Your very sincere and obliged
B. LONDON.

Miss H. More to Mr. Walpole.

Cowslip Green, July, 1790.

MY DEAR SIR,

I was figuring to my fancy that you were just beginning to hug yourself in the fallacious hope that I was lying supinely in the "Cowslip's Bell," under the sleepy influence which is ascribed to that flower, and that you should happily escape all impertinence and intrusion from me. While I was revolving this in my mind, and resolving that you should not long enjoy such a flattering delusion, a passage in a letter from Mrs. Boscawen spurs my tardy resolution; this passage intimates that "Mr. Walpole has the gout;" but my considerate informer, knowing that it was a communication which would interest me very much, kindly, and I hope truly, adds, But it is only a *little* gout. Having, however, been always apt to think that even a little gout is a great evil, I cannot forbear asking how you do, at the same time, with a truly absurd and female inconse-

quence, I desire you will not give yourself the trouble to tell me; I mean, in case you should not be perfectly recovered, and writing should be in the least inconvenient or painful to you: in the mean time I shall obtain from some friend in your neighbourhood a faithful account of the state of your health, —one of the few things to which absolute retirement and total sequestration from the world and its ways have not made me indifferent. I live here in so much quiet and ignorance, that I know no more of what is passing among mankind than of what is going on in the planet Saturn; and the feast in the *Champ de Mars*, with which I suppose

"All Europe rings from side to side,"

to me seems as remote, and not half so interesting, as the *Champs du Drap d'Or*; because in that splendid farce the actors were all illustrious, and some of them honourable, persons; and there seems to be something of magnificence in the remnants of chivalry and old grandeur of which modern festivity gives me no idea.

I cannot forbear telling you, that at my city of Bristol, during church-time, the congregations were surprised last Sunday with the bell of the public crier in the streets. It was so unusual a sound on that day that the people were alarmed in the churches. They found that the bellman was crying a reward of a guinea to anybody who would produce a poor negro girl who had run away, because she would not return to one of those trafficking islands, whither her master was resolved to send her. To my great grief and indignation, the poor trembling wretch was dragged out from a hole in the top of a house, where she had hid herself, and forced on board ship. Alas! I did not know it till too late, or I would have run the risk of buying her, and made you and the rest of my humane, I had almost said *human*, friends, help me out, if the cost had been considerable. Where and how are the Berrys? I hope they are within reach of your great chair, if you are confined, and of your airings if you go abroad. I hate their going to Yorkshire; as Hotspur says, "What do they in the north, when they ought to be in the south?" Adieu, my dear sir; I am, your dull and worthless correspondent, but your faithful and grateful friend,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to the Rev. J. Newton.

Great Pulteney-street, Dec. 27, 1790.

My dear Sir,

I grieve that the sincere and affectionate sympathy which I feel in your distress cannot in the least mitigate it; and I lament the impotence of human friendship, which is, for the

most part, obliged to waste itself in idle wishes and fruitless desires, without being of any actual service to those whose sorrows it would so gladly relieve; but I check myself for the too hasty expression, for I trust and believe that the sincere prayers which one Christian (however unworthy in some respects) presents to the throne of Grace for the sorrows of another and a better Christian, are not altogether without fruit. This being the case, I doubt not, dear sir, that you are now experiencing the comfortable fruit, not only of your own pious resignation, but of the hearty prayers of your many kind and pious friends; particularly of those whom you have been the happy instrument of awakening, and of leading into the paths of righteousness.

It will be a great gratification to me to learn that your health has not suffered from this awful and affecting visitation. I trust the consolations of the Almighty will support you; but, as I have generally found that the best and most rightly-turned minds were also the most susceptible of natural affections and tender attachments, I can easily conceive what your feelings must be, though I trust that *that* gracious God whom you love and serve has made your strength equal to your trial.

I have been confined for some weeks with a severe cough, to which I am subject. I know I ought to reckon this among my blessings, and I trust that in some degree I do so. I am fully persuaded that "all things work together for good to them that love God;" my only fear is that I do not love him cordially, effectually, entirely. I recommend myself to your prayers, and am, with sincere regard,

My dear sir,

Your much obliged and faithful

HANNAH MORE.

From Mr. Newton to Miss H. More.

Coleman-street Buildings, Dec. 30, 1790.

MY DEAR MADAM,

How very kind! I thank you: yet had you waited two days longer, I believe I should have been the first. I have begun to levy prayers and praises on my dear friends, and I was on the point of applying to you for your quota of the contribution when your letter came.

You will observe that I ask not only for prayers, but also for praises on my behalf. I could begin every letter with the words of David, "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!" Great has been his goodness! I am a wonder to many and to myself. You perhaps knew, madam, from what you have read of mine, and possibly from what you have seen in me, that my attachment to my dearest was great, yea excessive, yea idolatrous! It was so when it began. I think no writer of romances ever imagined more

than I realized. It was so when I married. She was to me precisely (how can I write it?) in the place of God. In all places and companies my thoughts were full of her. I did every thing for her sake, and if she was absent (for I made three long voyages to Africa afterward) I could take pleasure in nothing. So narrow were my notions of happiness at this time, that I had no idea I was capable of any thing greater or better than of being always with her. By degrees, He who has the only right to my heart, and who alone can fill it, was pleased to make me sensible of his just claim; and my idol was brought some steps lower down. Yet still, I fear, there was somewhat of the golden calf in my love, from the moment that joined our hands to the moment of separation. She was certainly my chief temporal blessing, and the providential hinge upon which all the principal events of my life have turned. Before I was four years old, she was sent into the world to be my companion, and to soften the rugged path of life. The difficulties in the way of our union were so many, so great, so apparently insuperable, that my hope of obtaining her seemed little less chimerical than if I had expected the crown of Poland. Yet at the proper time it took place. Fond as I was of her, I know that inconstancy and mutability are primary attributes of the *human heart depraved*, if left to itself; but as the providence of God joined our hands, a secret blessing from him cemented our hearts, and we certainly understood Thomson when he says,

> "Enamoured more as more remembrance swells
> With many a proof of recollected love."

Further, though I had deserved to forfeit her every day of my life, yet he spared her to me more than forty years; and, lastly (which is the crowning mercy), when he recalled the loan,—for, strictly speaking, she was not mine but his,—he made me willing to resign her. Through the long course of her very trying illness, he supported me. Though my feelings were often painful, I believe a stranger who had seen me in company, or heard me from the pulpit, would hardly have suspected what was passing at home. On the evening of the 15th instant, I watched her with a candle in my hand for some hours; and when I was sure she had breathed her last,—which could not at once be determined, she went away so easily,—I kneeled down by her bedside, with those who were in the room, and thanked the Lord, I trust with all my heart, for her dismission. I slept this night as well as usual, and, in defiance of the laws of tyrant custom, I continued to preach while she lay dead in the house. We deposited her in my own vault the 23d, and last Sunday evening I was enabled to preach her funeral-sermon, from Habakkuk iii. 17, 18.

In these respects, it pleased God to answer my repeated,

though imperfect, prayers. As different ministers have their different turns, mine (if I know my own) has led me much to attempt to comfort the afflicted. I have endeavoured to commend the Gospel to them as the pearl of great price, a catholicon, a sovereign balm for every wound, a cordial for every case, and to convince them that those who have a well-grounded hope of forgiveness and acceptance in the Beloved, however afflicted, can have no reason to deem themselves unhappy. When my own time of trial came, I felt myself in what the soldiers call the post of honour. I was very solicitous that I might not, by any symptoms of impatience or despondency, disgrace my own principles, or give occasion to the words of Job's friends (chap. iv. 3–5) to be applied to myself. I thought if my behaviour at such a season should prove the means of confirming others in the truths which I had often proposed to them in the days when I was in peace and prosperity, it would be a mercy sufficient to counterbalance my own personal sufferings. For I am to live, if I can, not for myself, but for Him who redeemed me from the house of bondage in Africa, and called me out of darkness into marvellous light.

In writing to you I feel my heart open: I am assured of meeting from you with that sympathy and sensibility of which I hope I am not myself wholly destitute; and therefore I will tattle on. This was not a sudden stroke. She did not die by a flash of lightning, by what is called accident, nor by those rapid disorders which break the thread of life in a few days or hours. The Lord gave me time to prepare for it; yea, by the gradual train of his dispensations, he gradually prepared me for it himself. She was confined to the house nearly two years, excepting that in September, 1789, she was enabled to go for a month to Southampton, and during the last autumn went out every evening in a coach for a little air. But she was shut up from the house of God and from visiting her friends, though, till about September, she could generally receive them at home. Indeed, till about that time I did not give up all hope of her recovery. But a total loss of appetite, or rather a loathing of food, then took place, which soon reduced her to a state of great weakness. In the beginning of October she took to her bed, and was soon after, I suppose from some defect in the spine, deprived of all locomotive power. She could neither move herself, nor without the greatest difficulty be moved; sometimes not so much as to have any thing about her changed for a fortnight together. Such, my dear madam, was the state of my idol; what a rebuke, what a lesson was it to me, to see her lie for eight or nine weeks in so sad and pitiable a situation! But the case was mingled with many merciful alleviations. Her patience was wonderful—her natural spirits as good as when she was in health. Often when my eyes were full of tears she has constrained me to smile. When she could not move her body, she

was thankful that she could move her hands, thankful that the Lord had laid no more upon her than what she could bear; and when I once said, "You are a great sufferer," she replied, "I do suffer, but not greatly." So to know that we are sinners, and so to know the Saviour, as to feel both the necessity and the liberty of applying to him, constitute that knowledge which chiefly deserves the name; and this, I trust, was her privilege long before her last illness. But the enemy of our peace found advantage from the weakness of her frame, to distress her with doubts which did not so directly apply to her own state as to the whole system of truth. She said, "If there be a Saviour,"—"If there be a God." In this interval, which lasted near a fortnight, there was some abatement of that serenity I spoke of, some signs of impatience, and she discovered a strong reluctance to the thought of dying. Then was my sharpest trial; but the cloud gradually wore off, and for the last month she spoke of her departure with great composure, and seemed perfectly reconciled to it. Yet she never recovered strength and freedom to speak much to me about herself. The Sunday before she died, I said, "If you cannot easily speak, and if your mind be at peace, I wish you to signify it by holding up your hand." She immediately held it up, and waved it for a little time. This from her, who knew the Gospel so well, comforted and satisfied me. It reminded me of the striking scene in Shakspeare, of Cardinal Beaufort, which closes with, "He dies—but gives no sign." Blessed be God it was not her case!

In the course of the day she asked for me, though I was seldom long or far from her; but her head was so much affected by lying many weeks in one position, that though perfectly sensible, she could hardly bear the sound of the gentlest voice, or the softest footsteps upon the carpet. I went to her; she stroked my face, squeezed my hand, and said, "My pretty dear!" an appellation she frequently gave me. We both dropped a few tears. These were the last words I heard her speak, and I could say but little. Such was our last farewell. From that night till she obtained her release, she gave little sign of life but by breathing.

Now, my dear madam, I have done. I shall trouble you with no more in this strain. She is gone—and may I not add, I am going? For though my health was never better than at present, I am advancing in my 66th year. What is the world to me now? All the treasures of the Bank of England could not repair my loss, or even abate my sense of it. My chief earthly tie to this life is broken; yet, I thank God, I am willing to live, while he has any service for me to do, or rather, while he pleases, whether I can serve him or not, provided I am favoured with submission to his will. I have lost my right hand. He has made me willing to part with it, but I must expect to miss it often. However, I thank him, I am by no

means uncomfortable. I am satisfied that he does all things well; and though some months ago, had it been lawful, I would have redeemed her life and health by the sacrifice of a limb, and thought the purchase cheap; yet, now his will is made known by the event, I trust I can from my heart say, with Fenelon, "I would not take up a straw to have things otherwise than they are." Time is short. A new and inconceivable scene will soon open upon us, and if they who now "sow in tears shall reap in joy," they may smile while they weep.

If I could relieve your cough by an act of mine, you would soon be well. The Lord could do this in a moment, but he does not—therefore, as you happily believe, the continuance of it must be best. When it shall be no longer necessary or salutary, he will remove it; for he delighteth in our prosperity; and they who love and trust him are never in heaviness of any kind an hour sooner or longer than there is need for it.

The blessed God is an infinite object, and our obligations to him as creatures, and especially as redeemed sinners, are immense; and, therefore, they who know him, and who truly love him, will always be sensible that their love, when in the most lively exercise, is very disproportionate to what it ought to be, and that their warmest returns of gratitude and service fall far short of what they owe him for his goodness. They who think they love him enough certainly do not love him aright; and a jealousy lest our love should not be cordial, effectual, and entire is rather a favourable sign than otherwise, and is not peculiar to you, but is experienced at times by all who have spiritual life. We seem to want some other word by which to denote our supreme regard to God, than that which expresses our affection to creatures. When we speak of loving him, it must be in a different sense. Creature-love is a passion; Divine love is a principle. It arises from an apprehension of his adorable perfections, especially as they are displayed in the great work of redemption, without which it is impossible for a sinner to love him. Much of his wisdom, power, and goodness are discernible in the works of creation and in his providential government; but the only proper, adequate, and full-orbed exhibition of his glorious character, suited to promote our comfort and sanctification, is in the person of "Christ Jesus and him crucified." We must go to the foot of the cross to understand what the Scripture declares of his holiness, justice, and truth, and the wonderful method by which they are brought to harmonize with the designs of his mercy and grace in the salvation of sinners. There is a sensibility of feeling in creature-love, which is no proper standard of our love to God. This, depending much upon constitution and the state of the animal spirits, is different in different persons, and in the same persons at different times. It is variable as the weather, and indeed is often affected by the weather and

a thousand local circumstances, no more in our power than the clouds which fly over our heads. It is no uncommon thing to judge more favourably of ourselves on this point on a bright summer's day, and while contemplating a beautiful prospect, than in the gloom of winter, or the hurry of Cheapside. The high affection of some people may be compared to a summer's brook after a hasty rain, which is full and noisy for a little time, but soon becomes dry. But true divine love is like a river which always runs, though not always with equal depth and flow, and never ceases till it finds the ocean. The best evidences are—admiration of his way of saving sinners,—humble dependence on his care,—desire of communion with him in his instituted means of grace,—submission to the will of his providence, and obedience to the dictation of his precepts. To keep his commandments, and to keep them as *His* commandments, from a sense of his authority and goodness, is the best, the most unsuspicious test of our love to him. If we wish to love him more, or to be more satisfied that our love is genuine, we must not love the world, nor be greatly solicitous of saving appearances in it. We must not be ashamed of the cross, nor think it strange or hard that the spirit which crucified our Saviour should show itself unfavourable to us, if we have courage to avow our attachment to him. These are hard sayings to us for a time; and for want of a more early compliance with them, we perhaps long walk like a man with a thorn in his foot; every step we take is slow, difficult, and painful. How often have I in the morning surrendered myself to God, and before the day has closed, have been ashamed or afraid that people should suspect that I thought of him! It is no wonder that such treasonable hesitation should often hinder my comfort. But he is gracious: he gradually convinces us of our folly, humbles us for it, and strengthens us against it. Whenever he has made us thoroughly willing, we may depend upon him to make us able and successful; yet in such a way, that our whole life will always be a warfare, and we shall always have cause for humiliation and shame.

As it is seldom I have the pleasure of writing to you; I make no apology for the length of this letter. I have not enlarged for want of employment. Many kind letters of condolence remain unanswered till you are served. How glad should I be to see you! to pass a long day in your company! Contrive to gratify me as much as you can when you come to town. Present my sincere respects and best wishes to your sisters. Miss Catlett, whom the Lord has spared for my comfort in my widowed state, is well. She thanks you for your kind remembrance of her.

Believe me to be, most sincerely,
my dear madam, your
affectionate and obliged friend and servant,
JOHN NEWTON.

Feb. 1791.

The Bishop of Llandaff* begs to return his best thanks for an elegant little book; it is written in a persuasive style and convincing manner, and will do much good, if any writing *can* do much good in a country which is debauched by its riches and prosperity.

From the Rev. J. Newton to Miss H. More.

Coleman-street Buildings, Feb. 24, 1791.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Many good things I receive in the course of a week. The last week brought me, among other good things, "An Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable World," with the words "*from the author*" on the blank page. Somebody deserves my thanks for the pleasure the perusal gave me, and I conceive that nobody has a better title to them than yourself. I venture to take it for granted. I had rather be chargeable with a mistake than suspected of ingratitude; but I think I am not mistaken, and therefore I thank you for it again and again.

The fashionable world, by their *numbers*, form a phalanx not easily impressible; and their *habits* of life are as armour of proof, which renders them not easily vulnerable. Neither the rude club of a boisterous reformer, nor the pointed delicate weapons of the author or authoress before me, can probably overthrow and rout them. But I do hope that an individual here and there may be wounded, and made to wince, and apply for healing to the leaves of the tree of life. A few instances, yea, a single instance of this kind, will be honestly worth the writing of one book, or the printing of a thousand; for to save one soul from death is an event of greater real importance than to save a whole kingdom from *temporal* ruin. Besides, in such an age as this, it is an honour and privilege to be able and willing to bear a testimony against evil, and in favour of the truth, though it should go no further. We are not answerable for the success, but we are bound to the attempt, according to the talents and opportunities afforded. I trust the unknown, though not unguessed at, writer of the "Estimate" will hear in that day, "Forasmuch as it was in thine heart, thou didst well that it was in thine heart." They who dare to confess the Lord, and to appear openly on his side, in the midst of this sinful and perverse generation, shall find, to their comfort, that he will confess them, and appear on their behalf before the holy angels and the assembled world. It will be seen *there* who acted the wisest part *here*.

I once received a fairy present "*from the author*" on the

* Dr. Watson.

"Manners of the Great," which likewise cost me near a minute's brown study to determine who sent it. I hit the right nail on the head at that time, and I am but a woful critic if they did not both come from the same hand; for while the similarity seems strongly marked, there is that difference which might be expected from the difference of time; the former was like the morning spread upon the mountains, which I accepted as the harbinger of advancing day. *Meliora latent.* I shall now long to see a third publication. In short, madam, if among the present members of the fashionable world any can be found unprejudiced and free from deep prepossessions, or so far as they are so, I expect and hope the "Estimate," if it comes in their way, will prove to them "as a light shining in a dark place," for which they will have reason to praise God and to thank the writer. My prayers will be for a blessing on it, and that in your endeavours to water others, you may be abundantly watered, comforted, and enriched yourself. I have a little publication in hand, very different from the "Estimate," but I trust it aims at the same mark: it is "Extracts from the papers of a woman who died at the age of thirty-seven, and lived for seven or eight years of that time in the humble capacity of a domestic servant in private families." Nothing of it is properly my own, except the preface, in which I venture to challenge the philosophers and wise skeptics of the age to produce such a character among the whole host of those who reject the principles of the gospel. The printer has exercised my patience, but I hope in the course of another month it will be abroad. I shall take care to lodge a copy for you at the Adelphi. I mean to send one to my diocesan, and should be glad if you were in town, and thought proper to introduce it to him under your auspices; otherwise I must do it by letter. It savours a little of what some people call methodism, but my views of his lordship's candour and judgment persuade me that he will not regret it. That *you* will approve the book I have not the least doubt. I think it will display one of the most beautiful exhibitions of the Christian character in retired life that I ever met with.

Through the goodness of the Lord, I jog on, not uncomfortably. A slight cast of sombre is spread over all I see, sufficient to darken the glare of worldly objects; but it does not burden me, or unfit me for the duties of my calling, or destroy the relish of my many remaining comforts. I have reason to be thankful that my wound does not prove so *deep* as I expected, but it is still as *fresh* as at first, nor can I wish it to be perfectly healed. I hope that while I can recollect where she sat, how she looked, and what she said, without hindering my business, hurting my spirits, or raising a murmuring thought against the will of God, it will not be my duty to forget her.

I know not where this may find you, but hope Mr. H. Thornton will know whither to direct its flight. I send it with a

selfish view, in hopes of gaining more than cent. per cent. by an answer. It gives me great pleasure to hear from you.

With my respects and best wishes to your sisters, if you are with them, and Miss Catlett's to yourself,

I remain, my dear madam,

Your affectionate and obliged servant,

JOHN NEWTON.

From the Bishop of Salisbury* to Miss H. More.

Cavendish-square, Feb. 23, 1791.

MY DEAR MADAM,

No confessor ever was more attentive to his penitent's entreaties for secrecy than I will be to yours. But neither your wishes nor my silence will avail. The internal evidence is too powerful for concealment; and no doubt can remain in the mind of the most cursory reader, if such exists, of the "Thoughts on the Influence and Manners of the Great," whether "The Religion of the Fashionable World" proceeds from the same excellent heart and most elegant pen. The work is admirably calculated, from its topics, the mode of pressing them, and the happy interweaving of Scripture language, to produce reformation in those for whose benefit it is professedly written. Whether extensive good will result from the publication, time alone will evince. But you will not have written in vain if even a few parents, a few masters of families, and a few young persons shall feel themselves so impressed with the truths you hold up to their view, as may induce them to regulate their conduct accordingly. Be the event, however, what it may, you must enjoy the first of all human blessings—the consciousness of having exerted the talents God has given you in endeavouring to serve the great interests of religion and virtue.

I think it necessary to apprize you, that previous to your injunctions, I had communicated to your two intimate friends Mrs. Boscawen and Miss E. Carter my sentiments of the work, and my more than suspicion of the author. Mrs. Barrington is equally pleased with myself; and, like myself, will not be contented with a single reading. You may rest assured that I will obey your commands respecting the copy destined for Mrs. Garrick, when it arrives. I have my fears that she is far from well, since she still remains at Hampton, though I know she intended to be resident in London.

Adieu, my dear madam, and believe me, with the truest regard and highest esteem,

Your most faithful servant,

S. SARUM.

* Dr. Barrington.

From the Rev. John Newton to Miss H. More.

May 16, 1791.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I hope for the pleasure of dining with you at Sir Charles Middleton's on the appointed day; but I should be afraid and ashamed to meet you anywhere, till I have asked your pardon for my involuntary blunder of this morning. Indeed I acted in the simplicity of my heart, and was not aware of the impropriety till too late. When I saw the effect, I was so confounded that I neither knew how to recede nor to go forward. I could bear reflecting what an awkward appearance I must have made more easily, if I had not been guilty of giving you pain. What can I say, but that I am sorry, very sorry? A poor amends indeed! But who can recall the day that is past, the bird that is flown, or the word (however foolish) that has once passed the lips?

I am obliged to make this my humble confession and acknowledgment to-night (though I cannot send it till Monday), that I may in some measure disburden my mind, and prevent my fault from harassing and teasing me to-morrow in the pulpit, and from morning to night. I will now hope that you have already forgiven me. I believe your goodness would think I have been punished sufficiently already, if you knew how this circumstance, like a dead fly in a pot of ointment, spoiled the pleasure I should otherwise have, in thinking that I saw you well to-day, and that I saw you here.

This little incident, for such I wish you to think it, though *I* ought to think otherwise, confirms to me a lesson which I have been trying to learn during the mortifying experience of many years—my total insufficiency to regulate my own conduct. I may well say, "Help I every moment need." I am not only unable to grapple with great difficulties, without assistance from on high, but if left to myself for an hour or a minute, I am capable of perplexing myself and hurting my friends in the smoothest scenes of life, and when the danger of doing wrong is most out of sight. Witness this day.

It has further reminded me of my insensibility towards the Lord. Though my repentance to youwards is very sincere; in a comparative view, I have reason to be ashamed of it. I truly love and respect you, and would not, as we say, willingly hurt a hair of your head. Yet I have no reason to boast of my sensibility, when I consider that the uneasiness I occasioned you has given me more pain than many things which my conscience has witnessed against me were evil in the Lord's sight. And yet it is he, not you, who was crucified for me. Ah! had I as quick a sense of his excellence and goodness, and of my obligations to him, as I seem to have respecting some of my fellow-creatures, how much more happy

would my life be! How much more ingenuous my walk before Him!

Again, when I considered what I had done, I considered, What is to be done next? Things are as they are, and I cannot alter them. It occurred to me immediately, that Miss More is generous and kind; though she has reason to be displeased, she is not resentful. If you have offended her, go and own your fault; and the next time you see her, you may expect a smile in token that she is not angry. I did so. I made no attempt to gloss over my imprudence by excuses, but simply applied for forgiveness. But how often have I held back, and kept a sullen silence, when I have sinned against the Lord, though he graciously says, "Only acknowledge thy offences." How often, like Adam, have I had recourse to evasions and palliations, as though I expected to hide myself from the All-seeing eye.

A poor creature am I, unable in my own spirit to ask or answer a question without giving some proof either of my sin or my folly: unwilling to confess, even when unable to deny; and, because I myself am evil, hard to believe that the Lord is good!

Such have been my reflections upon the *but* connected with your kind visit this morning. I have been willing to make the best of a bad affair, and to draw some instruction for the *future* from my regret for the irrevocable *past*. I hope, in particular from henceforth, to be very cautious that I do not wound your feelings.

The latter part of my epistle I write on Monday morning, and propose dropping it in my way to Lady Elgin's, whom I have not yet seen since my dearest left me. I was a little indisposed yesterday—but the Lord enabled me to read prayers and preach twice. Dr. Pulpit is often my good physician, when I am not quite well, nor yet very ill. I was better at night than in the morning; and had upon the whole a tolerable day.

How often have I had cause to adopt the Psalmist's prayer, "Take not thy word of truth utterly out of my mouth!" How justly might he silence me, and forbid me to mention his name any more! But he is gracious. He "knows my frame, and considers that I am but dust"—sinful dust and ashes.

May his blessing be with you, my dear madam, and may he grant you the best desires of your heart.

I am, with great sincerity,
Your affectionate and obliged servant,
JOHN NEWTON.

From Miss H. More to the Rev. J. Newton.

Monday, 10 *o'clock*.

Forgive you, my dear sir! No, upon second thought I will

not either, for your fancying there was any thing that required to be forgiven. I am sure I shall not easily forgive myself for behaving so as to encourage such an opinion in you. I am now really hurt for fear you should have attributed my confusion to a wrong motive. This, if I discovered any, was the real cause. Though almost everybody knows who wrote that pert little book (and it would be worse than affectation to deny it), yet I have been so little in the habit of owning it, that you took me by surprise, and though both the gentlemen present were apprized of the truth, I could not courageously bring myself to talk of it before three gentlemen. This is folly, perhaps; but the truth is, I feel myself so every way unfit to presume to set up for a teacher of others, that I wished to keep myself in the background. Neither my sex, my abilities, nor my conduct is such as fully to justify me in my own eyes for the things which I attempt, merely because others better qualified will not do it. All these things rushed into my mind together when you introduced the subject, and this operating on my spirits, which were particularly low, made me appear more confused than I knew of. And now my concern is, lest the *cause* was mistaken, and you thought it arose from my unwillingness to hear of my faults. O! my dear sir, think any thing of me rather than that. The more faults you will point out in that book, and in the author of it, the more you will oblige and gratify me. I am afraid I trust too much to my own strength, and that is the reason why I am so weak.

On reading over your letter again, I find I am not so angry with myself as I was, since my folly has caused you to extract so many good and useful remarks from it. Remember, when we meet we have a very pleasant ground of quarrel, for oversensibility on your part, and (perhaps you will say) false delicacy on mine. We shall discuss this and many other subjects, I hope, at my little Cowslip Green. I recommend myself to your prayers, of which I never stood more in need; and am, my dear sir, with true regard,

Your much obliged
and faithful friend,
H. More

From the Rev. J. Newton to Miss H. More.

May 28, 1791.

My dear Madam,

I had great reason to be pleased with my visit to Hertford-street yesterday; yet I believe the want of *one More* to make the party quite round and complete was felt, not by me only, but by all who were present. I was sorry that you could not be there, but much more so that you were detained by illness.

Thus our plans and prospects are often disconcerted. Yet the balks we meet with should not be called disappointments

Scripture experience and observation concur to teach us the inconstancy and uncertainty of all that pertains to the present state; and can we then be disappointed that things prove in the event exactly as we are previously warned to expect them! Who is disappointed at not seeing the sun at midnight! We know beforehand, and we can gravely tell others, how little dependence can be justly placed on appearances; and yet, when our own maxims are realized, we are apt to wonder, and to say, "Alas! what a disappointment!"

Undoubtedly had it been *necessary*, or even upon the whole *best*, that you should have been with us, as I hoped you would, the illness which confined you at home would have been either prevented or removed. I trust I would not exchange the persuasion I am favoured with, that all our concerns are under the guidance and management of infinite wisdom and goodness, for all the wealth of the Indies; and I am learning to extend this comfortable thought to the smallest and most common incident of human life, for indeed we are very incompetent judges which are the great and which are the small; for often those which we deem the most trivial are the pivots upon which those turn which we comparatively call the important.

Many obvious instances of this kind have occurred in the course of my small pilgrimage. Many have doubtless been entirely unnoticed and unperceived by me; some not a little striking and interesting, at least to myself, are recorded in my narrative, from which I transcribe the following remark, page 48: "This was one of the many critical turns of my life in which the Lord was pleased to display his providence and care, by causing many unexpected circumstances to concur in almost an instant of time. These sudden opportunities were several times repeated, each of them brought me into an entirely new scene of action, and they were usually delayed until almost the last moment in which they could have taken place.

"About the year 1777, Mr. Thornton desired a gentleman to put a letter for me into the general post-office, telling him that much depended upon my receiving it soon; yet he forgot it, and kept it in his pocket a day or two. Had not his recollection thus seasonably failed him, in all human probability I should have been settled for life at Hull instead of London. How seemingly slight and casual was this mistake; but who can estimate the innumerable consequences to myself and others which depended upon it!"

Oh! it rejoices my heart to think that the way of man (poor short-sighted man) is not in himself. All things shall work *together* to promote the will of God, and the good of those who love him. We cannot see this in any one thing considered *singly*, and detached from the rest with which it is connected; but when they are all brought together, like the

various pieces in the movements of a watch, each one will be found to have its proper place and use, so that the whole scheme would have been defective without it. It is a privilege to believe this *now*. But hereafter, when by a brighter light we shall take a distinct and comprehensive view of all the way by which the Lord has led us through this wilderness, I think we shall be filled with an admiration of which we can as yet have no just conception. The catastrophe of the drama when closed will develop the intricacy of the successive scenes which now pass before us, and of which at present we can perceive but one at a time. You perceive, my dear madam, under what limitations I must indulge the pleasing hope of waiting upon you at Cowslip Castle. Who am I that I should presume to say, to-morrow or soon I will go to such a place, and continue there a day, or a week, or an hour; whereas I know not what shall be on the morrow. However, as I have already hinted, should he to whom I belong see that the visit would be to my profit, as well as give me pleasure, (I have an eye to both in the expectation), or answer some truly valuable end, I believe I shall be gratified. You will perceive, likewise, how adroit I am in trying to make myself amends for missing you yesterday. For though I have spun out my thread to a mighty length, I took the pen up with the simple design of requesting you to inform me, when you can conveniently, that you are (as I hope) better; and then I flattered myself, that perhaps when the pen was in your hand, you would have the goodness to add something that you might have said if you had been at Sir C. Middleton's, or something else, which I can venture to promise will be highly acceptable to, madam,

Your affectionate and faithful friend,

JOHN NEWTON

From the Rev. J. Newton to Miss H. More.

Teston, July 17, 1791.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Some persons are pleased with the thought that they have trodden classical ground, and seen the hills and dales which Virgil and Cicero once saw. I envy them not, but I was pleased in my walk this morning to think that I was ranging the paths which Miss More had often visited before me; and if a wish of mine could have brought you hither, I should soon have seen you by my side. The good Lord brought us (meaning myself and Miss Catlett) in peace under this hospitable roof, between seven and eight o'clock last night. I cannot say that our journey to Townmalling was the most pleasant; for the afternoon was very wet, and we were seven in the coach, but it was safe, without the least alarm or impediment; and now I find, as I hope to find at the end of a more important journey, that the end truly compensates for the difficulties of the way

I have scope enough here for the exercise of a descriptive talent, if I possessed it, and were writing to one who never saw Teston—but to you I need not say a word either of persons or things. Nor is it necessary to inform you, that a situation like this, so different from the noise and hurry of London, is highly pleasing to me, and the more so because it is so seldom my lot. It is of the nature of all sublunary pleasures to lose much of their relish by frequency. I praise God that my health and spirits are good; though it is true, that in one respect, like the poet's wounded deer, I carry the arrow with me wherever I go. I cannot forget her;—no! not for five minutes at a time. One place reminds me of her, because she has been with me there, and another, because I see something to admire that I cannot now point out to her. This weakness (if philosophers will call it so) I expect not to be freed from while I remain in this world, nor indeed do I heartily desire it. I hope that it does not unfit me for the duties of my station; nor abate the sense of the many mercies and blessings which I am still favoured with; nor awaken in me one thought or wish contrary to the will of my God, who I am satisfied has done all things wisely and well, and given me cause to praise him for all, perhaps most for what the flesh is disposed to deem the severest. And yet I may be ashamed; how does the apostle disparage all inferior love and obligation, by that short but lively question, "Was Paul crucified for you?" Much we are ready to do or bear for those whom we dearly love; but there is a point beyond which we cannot pass. Jesus the Lord of glory emptied himself, took upon himself the form of a servant, that he might suffer, groan, bleed, and die for sinners. This was surpassing love, such love as none but he could show. Why then cannot I tell you that *he* is always upon my thoughts; that I cannot forget *him* for five minutes at a time? Ah, my heart—ungrateful heart! boast of thy sensibility no more.

St. Paul was crucified to the world; I am willing to hope that I can now in some measure say the same; it appears to me a very little thing indeed. It can do nothing towards filling up the void which the late dispensation has made in my mind. But his indifference to the world he obtained by contemplating the cross of Christ;—mine, alas, I fear is too much owing to the removal of a creature, a sinful worm like myself; but it behooves me to be thankful, if a smaller mean is sanctified to produce in any degree the effect, which, if I had not been very stupid and earthly, would long ago have been produced by the greater. I am now upon my second progress; my former was Cambridgeshire; it was pleasant, and I hope profitable to myself. May the Lord give his blessing to the frequent opportunities I had of preaching, that it may prove useful to others! I was from home three weeks, which will perhaps be about the limits of my Kentish tour. I shall then, if the Lord please, think

of travelling westward. I have several friends to see in different places, but my two principal objects will be Southampton and Cowslip Green. Which of these I shall visit first will probably depend upon the orders I may receive from you. Please to favour me with a line by the end of this month, and if you enclose it to Mr. Thornton it will be forwarded to me wherever I am. If there is any difference to you between August and September, in point of convenience, I will endeavour to accommodate myself to your instructions. My dear friend's Homer is coming abroad. I have received my copy, but the *publication* is not yet. I have cursorily surveyed the first volume; it seems fully equal to what I expected, for my expectations were not high. I do not think it will add to the reputation of the author of the Task, as a poet; but I hope the *performance* will not be unworthy of him, though the *subject* is greatly beneath the attention of the writer, who has a mind capable of original, great, and useful things; but he could not at the time fix his thoughts upon any thing better—and they who know his state will rather pity than blame him. I hope we shall have no more translations: I hope likewise, the author of a late "Estimate" will not be idle. You have a great advantage, madam;—there is a circle by which what you write will be read—and which will hardly read any thing of a religious kind that is not written by you. May the Lord bless, and guide, and guard you!

Your affectionate and obliged servant,

J. NEWTON.

From Miss H. More to the Rev. J. Newton.

Cowslip Green, July 26, 1791.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your obliging and kind letter, made still more agreeable, I think, by the local circumstance of its being dated from Teston, gave me much pleasure, especially as it announced the tidings of your intended kind visit. As you give me the privilege of choosing between August and September, you will not wonder that I prefer the former, if it were only because it is the nearest and it is the natural bent of selfish human nature, always to make sure of a good thing as soon as possible. As early, then, in August as may fall in with your general projects, we shall rejoice to see you, and as soon as you have made your arrangements, you will be so good as to let me know your time, that I may order my other little matters with an eye to it; for having a good many little schemes and desires in my head, I shall contrive to work the harder before your appearance, that I may afford to give myself some holydays while you are here. Pray, my dear sir, try to divest your memory of the delights and elegancies of Teston, before you turn your face towards my little thatched cottage, where a quiet cell, and a few books,

and a maple dish, and "a dinner of herbs," are all you can in reason expect; but then I hope we shall be able to furnish the appropriate sauce of "quietness therewith," for which I trust you will be contented to renounce the "stalled ox" of noisy London. Pray let me know what time you intend to bestow upon us,—the more the better. I hope you will do some good in this dark region, where the light of Christianity seems scarcely to have penetrated. We are sending missionaries to our colonies, while our villages are perishing for lack of instruction. You will hardly believe the things you will see and hear in this neighbourhood.

I must not conclude without expressing my thankfulness to the Almighty, that I have my little cottage standing to receive you in. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we were not consumed." My house has been on fire. Silently did it burn the whole night, and had so nearly burned through the beams of the ceiling, as to reach within a few inches of my sister's bed, where she lay insensible of her danger. But we were not, I trust, insensible of our deliverance, which was very providential: for we had no water. A few days will repair the damage.

My sisters join in kind regards with,

My dear sir,

Your much obliged and faithful

HANNAH MORE.

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

1791.

MY DEAR MADAM,

If I had not been sensible that an intrusion on your time would have been a breaking in upon what was dedicated to piety and virtue, I could not so long have forborne to have troubled you with a letter. I had flattered myself, that whenever Mr. Locke's urn was finished, you would inform me to whom it was to be paid for; but I fear you have made me incur the blame of the artificer, who must think I am forgetful of the debts I owe, and the honour and pleasure I receive: the last article is indeed beyond my power to repay, so you must be content to let it lie a mortgage on my gratitude; but from the artist who made the urn, by a few words on Hoare and Co. or Newbury Bank, I can very easily obtain a receipt in full: so beg you will have the goodness to inform me of the sum, and the person to whom it is due, and no time shall be lost to re-establish my reputation with him. I believe too, in the few and short interviews I had with you in London, I omitted paying you five guineas, which you did me the favour to convey for me to a distressed farmer.

I will get Mrs. Barbauld's verses on Mr. Wilberforce; he is

a subject worthy of the nymphs of Solyma; I received the first intelligence of them from your letter.

The elements of air and water at Bath agreed so ill with Dr. Beattie that he returned to us in less than a week, and we were in hopes of enjoying his society in the autumn; but a letter arrived from a relation of his at Aberdeen, which induced him to return immediately, to attend the invalid who had tenderly nursed his dying son. The doctor is himself in a very bad state of health and spirits.

As I know the generosity and tenderness of your heart, I will not tell you how much I was mortified at your informing me I must not flatter myself with the hopes of seeing you at Sandleford this summer. The external forms of the place and house are much improved, but I had flattered myself you would give it *a soul*. Mr. Wilberforce informed me of the great pains you are taking for the poor villagers; and those pains are so judiciously directed, that I find the success answers your laborious efforts and kind attentions; but let me beg you to be careful of your health, which is an object of importance to the world.

As the posture of writing disagrees with me, I must not indulge myself in expressing how much I feel myself flattered by having my name placed with yours and Mr. Locke's on the urn. The highest honour I can pretend to is being declared the admirer of your talents, and the friend of your virtues.

I beg of you to present my best respects to the Duchess-dowager of Beaufort; you cannot by any expression exceed my real respect for her grace. Mr. Montagu and his amiable wife present their best compliments.

I am, my dear madam, with the most perfect and affectionate esteem, your most obliged

And faithful humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

From the Rev. John Newton to Miss H. More.

Priestlands, near Lymington, Sept. 7, 1791.

In Helicon could I my pen dip,
I might attempt the praise of Mendip.
Were bards a hundred, I'd outstrip 'em,
If equal to the theme of Shipham.
But harder still the task, I ween,
To give its due to Cowslip Green!

MY DEAR MADAM,

I send to you and by you my five-fold thanks to five ladies who will always be dear to my heart. I have no reason to think that I ever lived a single day so as to wish to live it over again. But were I obliged to retrace some one past week, and to choose which it should be, I think the week I spent at

the foot of Mendip, though it might have competitors, would certainly put in its claim.

I contracted a sort of friendship for Mendip while I was with you, and therefore you will not wonder that when I was at King's Weston, it gave me some pleasure to see my new old friend peeping at me over the inferior hills. I immediately recognised him or her (which Miss Sally pleases), and was so foolish as almost to envy a hill, which, if it had eyes like me, might look at Cowslip Green from morning to night. I descended from King's Weston hill with some reluctance. What a prospect was I forced to give up! I thought, like Peter, "It is good to be here." But neither he nor I were designed to spend our days on the top of a hill. He had something to do for his Lord, and so I hope have I. If so, farewell the retirement of Mendip and King's Weston; and welcome the noise and dirt of Cheapside and of Coleman-street.

I proceeded from Mr. Ireland's to Bath on Tuesday, the 23d of August; while I was there I called, as permitted, in Great Pulteney-street, and admired the prospect from the drawing-room windows. But as I could neither see the ladies of the house nor Mendip, I made but a short stay.

On Tuesday the 30th, we travelled over all the high hills between Bath and Poole, and came hither to dinner on Saturday last, the 3d instant. Our gracious Lord led us in perfect safety; not only preserved us from real harm, but kept danger out of sight. And we are still favoured with health; only Betsy's spirits sometimes flutter a little, especially when she sees black clouds; for she remembers the thunder-storm, and is not sure of finding so convenient a cupboard to hide in at every place. But now to be a little serious. Every Sunday morning, my thoughts set out in quest of you and Miss Patty, and though I know not what road you may have taken, I think I seldom miss finding you. There is a communion in spirit among the believing members of that body of which Jesus is the living head, which I believe is not impeded by local distance. Thus the apostle speaks of being present with the Colossians, though he had never seen them, chap. ii. 5. The powers of the mind in this respect are wonderful, though little attended to, and perhaps are heightened when we think of those whom we have seen, and whom we know and love. How often in writing a letter have I been led, without choice or design, to such subjects as have exactly suited my correspondents, no less so than if I had been upon the spot with them, or had previously known their situation, and even their thoughts. I cannot account for this sympathy, but of the fact I am assured by a thousand instances. And it helps me to understand why such a man as St. Paul was so earnestly solicitous for the prayers of his friends, though doubtless many of them were greatly below him in grace. If sometimes, when riding over the mountains, you should happen to think of me, it is possible,

perhaps probable, that I am thinking of you at the same moment. Depend upon it, I am often near you and with you in the apostle's sense, and my thoughts are thoughts of prayer that the Lord may bless and keep you and your companions, protect your persons, comfort your hearts, and crown your endeavours with growing and abundant success.

When I think of your turn of mind, what you give up, and to what hardships and fatigues, not to say dangers, you expose yourself for the instruction of the ignorant and the relief of the wretched; and especially knowing, as surely I do know, that the Lord whom you serve has given you the grace of humility,—so that far from valuing yourself upon your exertions, you can sit down at his feet ashamed and sorry that you can do no more, I adore and praise him who has put it into your heart, strengthens your hands, and has hitherto prepared your way. I am not often charged with flattery,—I mean not to flatter, but to encourage you in the name of the Lord. He has highly honoured you, my dear madam; he has allotted you a post of great importance, and for which perhaps no person in the kingdom has equal advantages with yourself. Zeal, perhaps, sufficient to attempt something in the same way might be found in many; but other requisites are wanting. If a prudent minister should attempt such an extensive inroad into the kingdom of darkness, he might expect such opposition as few could withstand. But your sex and your character afford you a peculiar protection. They who would try to trample one of *us* into the dust will be ashamed *openly* to oppose *you:* I say *openly:* I believe you do not expect they will thank you, much less assist you. There are those who will probably show their teeth, if they are not permitted to bite. But you are prepared for consequences; the Lord will be with you, and the blessing promised to those who appear decidedly on the Lord's side, and who are instrumental in turning many to righteousness, will make you rich amends for all that you may meet with, of the unpleasant or unkind. What a world do we live in, that it should require a good degree of resolution and grace to be able to say, I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ! Though the gospel be the brightest display of the wisdom, love, power, and glory of the great God,—though it be the highest object of admiration to all superior intelligences, the greater part of mankind are ashamed of it, yea! despise and hate it to such a degree, that an avowed attachment to it is sufficient to dissolve the strongest and closest ties of friendship, and often to make those of our own household our enemies. Poor mortals! Is it not enough that you reject the authority of God, and trample upon his holy commandments, unless you despise his mercy likewise! But so it is; and such is the awful extent of our depravity. Many are thus disposed, and we also should have been like-minded, if left to ourselves. Where there is a difference, grace has made it; for by nature we are no wiser or better than others

What do we owe to the great Shepherd, who not only died for his sheep, but who seeks them out, while they are heedlessly wandering in the paths that lead to destruction! When he first knocked at the door of our hearts, we (or at least I) attempted to bar or bolt it against him. Like the man possessed by the legion, I thought he was come to torment me before the time. Could my wretched will have prevailed, he would have departed from me, and left me to perish. But he pitied my madness, and if I see his face with comfort at last, as I trust I shall, I must confess that he saved me not only in defiance of my enemies, but in defiance of myself. What shall we render to the Lord for all his mercies! He needeth us not. We can add nothing to his all-sufficiency and glory—yet he leaves us scope for the exercise of our gratitude—he invites us to take himself for our exemplar, and his merciful conduct towards us as a pattern for us to follow in our behaviour towards our fellow-creatures. To forgive as we have been forgiven; to return good for evil; to overcome evil, if possible, with good; to imitate in our little circles his diffusive benevolence, and thus to walk in his footsteps, will cause the spirit of the world which crucified him to act more or less against us. But the lions are chained, and the chain is in his hands. They cannot stir without his permission, nor go an inch beyond the bounds he prescribes.

Fear not, my dear ladies; all the praying souls upon earth, all the saints in glory, all the angels of the Lord, and the Lord of angels himself are with you. If the veil were withdrawn, if you could see with the eyes of Elisha's servant or of Stephen, you would see that there are many more for you than against you. But faith is the evidence of things not seen. I trust you can look up to the Saviour and behold him as looking down upon you, holding forth the prize in view, and saying, "Fear none of these things"—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." May you fight under this banner, and go forth conquering and to conquer.

If the Lord please, I shall be at Southampton till about the 26th or 27th of this month. Knowing your engagements, I will not expect a letter, but if one should come unexpectedly, I shall highly prize it. I believe I have formerly sent you some account of this beautiful place. Much still remains unsaid, but I have neither time nor room to say it at present. My dear Miss Catlett unites with me in respects, love, and thanks to you all, jointly and severally. May the blessing of the Most High rest upon you all, abroad and at home, in temporals and in spirituals, in time and in eternity. Amen. Pray for us. And believe me to be,

Your very affectionate,
And much obliged,
JOHN NEWTON

From Miss H. More to the Rev. J. Newton.

Cowslip Green, Sept. 19.

MY DEAR SIR,

I should have thanked you sooner for your very agreeable letter, but have been a good deal indisposed with a cold caught by walking over our mountains pretty late at night, which I was made to do by a frightful accident of a horse falling, but without doing me the least harm; not a bone of me was broken. This is the second striking deliverance I have had within two months; the other, you know, was from fire. I hope I am not unthankful to Divine Providence; though I grieve to say, my cold heart is not so much animated by a sense of these great mercies as by the comparatively small favours and kindnesses I receive from poor perishing mortals like myself.

I assure you your kind wishes, and your affectionate remembrance of the mountains of Mendip and of the little hermitage at the foot of it, are returned with great sincerity. Your pipe still maintains its station in the black-currant bush, and that hand would be deemed very presumptuous and disrespectful which should presume to displace it. For my own part, the pipe of Tityrus, though in my youthful days I liked it passing well, would not now be deemed a more venerable relic; and even the little sick maid Lizzy, who gratefully remembers the spiritual comfort you administered to her, often cries out, "Oh dear! I hope nobody will break Mr. Newton's pipe."

Poor Miss Catlett! I hope she has had no more terrors. Whatever other compliments and kindnesses she may have received since she left Cowslip Green, I will venture to say not one of her friends has treated her with a grander thunderstorm, which if she had happened to admire it as much as I do, she would have reckoned among the august spectacles of her tour. In such alarms, however, may she always find friends as commiserating, and cupboards as convenient. All beg to be recommended most kindly to her.

I thank you very cordially, my dear sir, for the encouragement you give me, and the kind assurance of being remembered in your prayers: though I am not (I thank God) what is called low-spirited, my spirits are not strong; from the make of my mind I am too easily acted upon by things without. This is partly owing to that natural infirmity which those who flatter us call sensibility, and partly to a weak faith, and the little progress I have made in the divine life. I live in the hope of growing every year wiser and better, but that hope is hitherto so little realized, that it would be quite faint were it not sometimes refreshed by those gracious promises so frequently held forth to us. I feel I *do* nothing, and the motives of my best actions (I use that epithet only comparatively) are not pure; some human mixtures, some debasing alloys enter

into those things which appear to others the most right. I am anxious about events which yet I know and acknowledge to be in higher hands; I do not bend my own to the Divine will, and feel an impatience under such dispensations as are against my liking. Some which do not really cross me I bear well enough, and thence get a great deal of commendation which I do not deserve.

Patty and I remember you as we are trotting over the hills. She desires her affectionate regards, as do all the rest. You would enjoy the vale of Cowslips in this renewed spring: we have every thing of the golden age except the innocence; the garden is full of roses as in June, and an apple-tree literally covered at the same moment with fruit nearly ripe and fresh blossoms.

Adieu, my dear sir. Pray remember that no one stands more in need of your prayers than

Your most obliged and faithful,

H. More.

From the Rev. J. Newton to Miss H. More.

October 8, 1791.

My dear Madam,

Your unexpected, though hoped-for letter, found me at Southampton. Though I am so often with you in spirit, I knew nothing of your fall till you informed me. Such is the state of this world. A dear friend may be suffering either a hundred miles off or in the next room, while we suppose them in health, peace, or safety. I would be thankful that you received no harm; but in reality you were in no danger. You are the Lord's servant in the path of duty, and he is your protector. While your horse was falling, it was not a matter of hazard whether you should be hurt or not.

I do not know that in the whole course of our travels, about seven hundred and fifty miles in all, any of the horses concerned in carrying us along the road made a single false step. We were as free from alarm as from hurt. We staid at Portswood Green, near Southampton, eighteen days with my dear friends Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, who accompanied, or rather conducted us to Reading, where I preached on the Thursday evening.

Last year was a time of heavy trial, though intermingled with numberless mercies. Clouds and storms surrounded me, and sometimes I feared I should sink; but I was for the most part enabled to keep in sight of my gracious and infallible pilot; and in the midst of my sharp conflicts, I possessed something of a peace at bottom, which only He could have maintained in such a heart and at such a time. Since then, and especially during my late excursions, I have been remarkably favoured with a halcyon season. My health and spirits were good. I hardly met with a slight inconvenience, much less

with any thing that deserved the name of a trial. No perplexing news from home—nothing in the families I visited to render our interviews embarrassed or uncomfortable. Safety conducted me on the road—kindness waited to receive me wherever I stopped. "Praise the Lord, O my soul!" and do you, my dear madam, help me to praise, as I doubt not you helped with your prayers.

I was enabled to keep my appointed time, but Mary Woolnoth was not quite ready to receive me. I hope to find a *clean and a full church* to-morrow, and especially that the Lord will condescend to meet us. For what is a court, or a levee, or a drawing-room, unless the king be present! His courtiers do not assemble to look at each other, but to see him.

Though I have been at home a week, so many things call for attention after a long absence, that I have not been able to execute your commission; but in another week I hope to forward you one of each sort of such books as I think will suit your purpose, with their prices.

How capacious is the human mind! While one or a few leading objects seem to fill and engross it, there is ample room for the admission of a thousand more, without crowding. I wish to think, in a manner, of nothing but "Jesus Christ and him crucified." Could I forget for an hour who is the sinner, and who is the Saviour, it would be a dark and indeed a dangerous hour to my soul. Besides this, the idea of my dear Mrs. Newton is always present, and the cheering hope of meeting her again in a better world is, next to the truths and promises of the gospel, the chief cordial and support of my spirit. While I was abroad, I acquired a large number of new and pleasing ideas, and among these none more pleasing, more brilliant, more frequently present, than the impressions of Cowslip Green. O my dear ladies! O Mendip! O root-house! O chamber of peace! O ye walks and seats! if I never visit you more, I shall think of you, and pay you a mental visit often and often. Surely no pipe in Somersetshire is so honoured as that which dwells (there may it long dwell) in your black-currant bush. I thank Lizzy for her care about it. Indeed it is very frail, and if once broken cannot be replaced by me. I could send you one I had smoked in here; but without the merit of having been used in your garden, it would have no claim to a place in the bush, nor be worth sticking up.

Please to tell Miss Patty that when I wrote to Mr. Cowper from Southampton, I mentioned her request, and by way of hint how he might fill his quarto page, I sent him my verses (rhymes they are at least, if not poetry.) I have not heard from him yet, but I expect something very suitable and very elegant. Perhaps he will wait the opportunity of a *flat* conveyance, for I told him the paper must not be doubled, if it can be avoided. I think he stands too much in awe of my displeasure to send me a *flat refusal*. Besides, he is a friend of the

sex: and though, perhaps, he may not have heard of Miss Patty before, he is no stranger to Miss Hannah. I think he will be glad of the honour of being in Miss Patty's books. I congratulate you on Mr. J——'s preferment to a living of 40*l.* per annum. Though he will have all the profit, you will go more than halves with him in the pleasure. The Lord has made you an instrument of relieving a poor but deserving servant of his, and you will feel the force of that divine aphorism which the apostle has preserved from oblivion in Acts xx. 35. I mean with you to say nothing worse of deans and chapters for some time to come, than that they are *capable* of doing a good thing. Oh! how well did those words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," become the mouth of Him who when he was rich made himself poor,—took upon him the form of a servant, and to enrich those who by nature were his enemies, endured the cross, despising the shame! Happy they who admire and adore this Saviour, and study the display of his unspeakable benevolence and philanthropy, till they imbibe his spirit, and are transformed into his image! A *Christian indeed*, who takes his Lord for his pattern, and like him, and for his sake, "goes about doing good," is a public light and a public blessing. May grace increase their numbers, and enlarge their spheres!

May the blessing of God rest upon you all, jointly and severally! Amen! Pray for

Your obliged and affectionate

JOHN NEWTON.

From Sir James Stonhouse to Miss Sarah More.

Oct. 17, 1791.

Sally is a very good Sally. Sally came and took care of me when I was sick. Sally will answer my letters. Poetess is a great lady, and flies abroad on the wings of cherubim, twenty miles from Cowslip Green, and for what?—why, truly, to see poor ragged boys and girls, and to teach them to fly.

I send you a copy of my letter to your Bishop of St. David's, but I have not yet read it, and so send it me back; were I to live at Bath, and any of the sisterhood desired me to lend them a book, I should say, answer me these three questions.

When will you *begin* to read it?—How many days do you desire to keep it?—Will you assuredly send it me back in that time, that I may read it *again myself*, or lend it to others?

I have had a good letter from a good woman, Mrs. Trimmer, who tells me the sixth edition of "Thoughts on the Manners of the Great" is in the press; and it is in vain for your sister any longer to deny the production. Let her fix her name to this edition. Never surely was any little treatise more universally applauded. I hope she is preparing all her works for the press: send volume by volume to Cadell, that there may

be no delay in printing. Do not let her stay till she has corrected the whole.

The music on the terrace on Sundays is pregnant with evil from Windsor to London; it infects all the neighbourhood ten miles round Windsor, and oh! what an irreligious example to the youths of Eton! Yet a proclamation against vice and profaning the Sabbath is ordered to be read quarterly in our churches.

Do come and see us, we have scarcely a friend in the world we can open our minds to, as we can to the sisterhood.

Yours most affectionately,

JAMES STONHOUSE.

From the Rev. J. Newton to Miss H. More.

Nov. 19, 1791.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Enclosed you have my apology for breaking in upon you again so very soon. I was willing to send you Mr. Cowper's letter, while it is fresh and new, and not quite willing to deny myself the pleasure of paying a pepper-corn acknowledgment in my own name. As I told him the paper must not be doubled, he is waiting till somebody comes to town, who has a parcel long enough and broad enough to receive the paper in its extended dimensions; and he still waits, because so many persons who travel hither from Olney carry their travelling wardrobe in their pockets.

I have, as he says, heard of the pompous edition of Milton that is to come abroad. I have not seen the printed proposals; the report sufficed for me. I am sorry to see the author of the "Task" degraded into a mere editor, though of Milton himself, whom I certainly prefer to a hundred Homers. But it seems he is not to be merely an editor; he thinks he may do some service by notes and elucidations, not in the manner of Dr. Newton, but in a moral and religious strain.

Yet it is pitiful, and to many who love him it seems strange, yea, passing strange, that a writer so truly original should not favour us with writings in his own original way. It is not, however, quite strange to me. He has many friends, so called, who, in the time of his recess, cared little about him, till his name and fame as an author began to be spread abroad in the polite circles. Since that period they have buzzed about him, and by their fine words and fair speeches, have imperceptibly given an inferior direction to his aims, and withdrawn him more out of my reach. For there was a time when he would not have undertaken a work of any extent without previously apprizing me. The state of his mind makes me cautious how I express my grief and disappointment, otherwise I should write to him in large letters. But as it must be so, I will try to be glad that he has not been led to a worse subject than Milton, or to translate his untranslated poems. I hinted to him my fears,

lest your attention to your important services around Mendip should abridge the public of what they still expect from your pen. He has caught my fears, but I hope both his and mine will prove groundless. I should still like Cowslip Green even in November, if you or any of the ladies are there, otherwise, perhaps, I might begin to think it dreary. I am now at a loss where to find you and Miss Patty on a Sunday morning, for I think you can hardly travel much in the weather we have had lately; but Mr. H. T. will tell my letter where to look for you.

Mr. Thornton is so much engrossed by the Sierra Leone business that I can seldom see him. My hope that the Lord will breathe a blessing upon this design has been much confirmed, since he has inclined the hearts of two faithful and competent ministers to accept a mission to that inhospitable bourne. One of them, Mr. Gilbert, is my intimate friend, and I know no man in our line who seems better suited for the service. The other, Mr. Horne, bears an exceedingly good character; he is sensible, lively, and zealous: they are first cousins and dear friends; perhaps Gilbert is the more solid and temperate. Mr. Horne seems to have more of fire, imagination, and that impetus which some brand with the stigma of enthusiasm, but without which attempts in the great and arduous style seldom succeed. I trust their different talents, when blended like the bass and treble on the same instrument, will so correspond as that the effect will be harmony. I believe this is the first instance we can find in the annals of mankind, where the civilization and salvation of the inhabitants was the primary object in settling a colony.

You will allow me gently to sigh over the poor account you give me of your health, yet I know all is right. Methinks if I could, I would give you and Miss Patty, not shoes, but nerves and sinews of brass and iron, to fit you for traversing Mendip; but I should do wrong, for how then would the *power* of God be manifested in your *weakness*. It is really singular that such an athletic service should be appointed for such delicate instruments. It is the Lord's doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes; may he have all the glory, and may you have that comfort and satisfaction which may make you a rich compensation for all you suffer in so good a cause.

I send a large portion of my best love, respects, and thanks, to be distributed among the five ladies, together with Miss Catlett's. If any of them have left you, I beg you to send their quota after them to Bath. We are, through mercy, both well. I am in perfect health, and as comfortable, in a temporal view, as I even wish to be. But still I miss—I feel—alas! my poor heart! it will beat. There is a void within which the creature cannot fill, but the Creator can. Blessed be the Lord my Saviour, I can say, "All is well."

I am, most sincerely,

Your affectionate and much obliged servant,

JOHN NEWTON.

From Mr. Cowper to Mr. Newton.

1791.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I should not have waited till Mr. B——'s journey would afford me an opportunity to send by him, but should have given you an earlier account of Mrs. Unwin, knowing how kindly you interest yourself in her recovery, had not her amendment been so very gradual that the difference between day and day has been almost imperceptible. The course of many days, however, has at last made a considerable difference, and would the season allow her more air and exercise, she would soon, I believe, be restored, if not absolutely to health, at least to such a share of it as she usually enjoys;—a greater temporal mercy than this I cannot know, and should be happy if my spiritual mercies were such as enabled me to be as thankful for it as I ought.

I send you at last the long-expected verses, not worth the package or the carriage, and claiming no other merit than merely that of evidencing my readiness to comply with the request both of an old friend and a fair lady.

In vain to live from age to age,
We modern bards endeavour;
In Patty's book I wrote one page,
And gained my point for ever.

WILLIAM COWPER.
Exemplar verum.
Witness, J. N.

For yours I return you many thanks; if they do not pretend to the laurel, all ambition of which you disclaim, they at least deserve it; not indeed on account of the labour you have expended upon them, for it is evident they did not cost you much, but for the ease and unaffected simplicity of their manner, which prove the author's good sense and judgment, and are a thousand times more pleasing, in a composition on such a subject, than fine tropes and figures. I never yet believed that a poet, if he could be very flowery on the death of a friend, cared much about it. No tears are so unostentatious as those of the weeping muses.

My hands are very full of business of various kinds, and I cannot at present add more than that, with Mrs. Unwin's best remembrances, and with Lady Hesketh's compliments,

I remain, my dear friend,
Most truly yours,
WILLIAM COWPER.

From Miss H. More to the Rev. J. Newton.

Bath, 1791.

My DEAR SIR,

I believe I ought to thank you for one, two, three (I fear I might go on) very kind, very agreeable, and very instructive letters. Perhaps I could bring no very *good* excuse for not having answered them directly; though, if I were disingenuous, I could bring a great many *bad* ones; but I am so far from countenancing that vulgar doctrine of "a bad excuse being better than none," that I really think none is better than such middling ones as I should bring; so I throw myself on your mercy, and proceed to thank you in Patty's name for Mr. Cowper's stanza. It is elegantly turned, but I confess if it were to me, I should not have been contented to be put off with a compliment from a hand which can deal out so much nobler things. You know my admiration for this truly great genius, but I am really grieved that he should lower his aims so far as to stoop to become a mere editor and translator. It is Ulysses shooting from a baby's bow. Why does he quit the heights of Solyma for the dreams of Pindus? "What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba?" In his own original way he has few competitors; in his new walk he has many superiors; he can do the best things better than any man, but others can do middling things better than he.

I was indeed much pleased with your friend Mr. Stillingfleet—a very solid, judicious, serious man; with a great deal of piety, regulated by a great deal of prudence. Another acquaintance of yours, of a directly opposite cast of character, I think, has lately been to see us,—Mr. Collins; he seems very amiable, and I believe does a great deal of good by that very eccentricity, which, if practised by Mr. Stillingfleet, would utterly defeat his usefulness. There is nothing in which I more admire the wisdom and goodness of God than in his various gifts to ministers; so accommodated to the various wants of their hearers, that I believe he works his will by every sort of instrument, from the dry logician who successfully defends the outworks, to the awakening preacher, who attacks corruption in its secret citadel, the heart. That the latter is more useful, and turns more to righteousness, who can doubt? yet we must not deny the usefulness of the other.

My sisters desire me to say a great many handsome things for them; I only say a *true* one when I assure you that I am, dear sir,

Your faithful and obliged
H. MORE.

From the Rev. J. Newton to Miss H. More.

I am glad Mr. Stillingfleet had the pleasure of seeing you when he was at Bath; he is a valuable man: of all my many friends I know no one with whom my heart is more in unison, or in habits of greater intimacy, than with him. To him, to Mr. Robinson of Leicester, and Mr. Cecil here, I can open my mind with greater freedom than to most: they are tried, and chosen, and faithful servants of our Lord. When I look back upon my former state in Africa, and compare it with my present situation (which is a part of my every day's employment), there are few instances of the Lord's goodness which affect me more than the pleasing and profitable connexions he has afforded me with; many who, if they could once have met with such a creature in the street, would have crossed the way to avoid him. That strong feature in the apostle's picture of human nature, "*hateful and hating one another*," applied emphatically to me. I hated God and his people, and was in myself more detestable; and according to my conduct and deserts was my lot: I had not a friend upon the earth. But now, I could draw out a long list of friends whom, if I only valued (which would be undervaluing them) at a thousand pounds apiece, would constitute me very rich; and indeed these appear to me to be the principal temporal riches of which it is worth while to take an inventory. What would it avail me to sit in a large and open room, to have wax tapers in candlesticks of gold, and to be attended by twenty mercenaries, if I had no friends? What can these toys contribute to the real enjoyment of life? But the pleasures of friendship will bear reflection; especially when friendships are formed upon a common union with the great Friend, whose influence, like that of the sun, enlightens and enlivens every thing else.

How I digress! but it is my way, and I know you will bear with me. How comfortable and honourable does religion appear under the idea of a state of friendship with God! He loved us when we were enemies, and has taken a wonderful and the only possible method of reconciling us to himself. He knew that nothing less than the sacrifice upon the cross could subdue our enmity, and that this, when rightly understood, would subdue it effectually. Therefore he gave himself for us, Col. i. 21, 22. This was love passing knowledge indeed!

And now, what a privilege we have in an ever-living, ever-present, all-sufficient, infinitely wise, and compassionate friend and ally! When he constrains us by love to engage on his side, he engages on ours, and we shall be surely safe while he protects us. With what confidence does David call upon his ally for assistance, Psalm xxxv. 1–3, and how may we rejoice

if we may use his words in Psalm xlvi. 7. Then we need not greatly care who can be against us.

But friendship is delicate: though we would do or suffer, bear and forbear much for a friend, there are some things we can better brook from an enemy than from those whom we love. How tender is that admonition, how forcibly should it affect our hearts,—Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God! Ah! what a heart have I, to be capable of grieving such a friend!

When I write to you, I write to all the ladies—I love them all; I send my love and duty to them all, and so does my dear Betsy.

May the blessing of the Lord unite, persuade, strengthen, comfort, and animate you, that with one heart and mind you may burn and shine, striving together for the faith and hope of the gospel.

I am, dear madam,
Your very affectionate and much obliged
JOHN NEWTON.

From Bishop Porteus to Miss H. More.

Sundridge, Kent, 1791.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I shall soon advertise the restorative virtues of the moat and the tides of Fulham, for Dr. Beattie was another of the patients whom we sent away much recruited and refreshed in body and mind, after trying the salutary springs of Bath in vain. He complained most bitterly of that place. He said that all the elements were in conspiracy against him; the fire of the sun burned him, the dust of the earth choked him, the grossness of the air oppressed him, and the waters totally unbraced and dissolved him. He was glad to have recourse to the pure vivifying atmosphere of Fulham again for a few days, before he returned to Scotland, which he did soon after in tolerable health and spirits.

The meadow on the banks of the Thames has advanced much in beauty since you left us; and if I should be rich enough to erect a little thatched cottage upon it next summer, I am not sure whether this place will not grow jealous of it, and whether even your cowslips must not bow their yellow heads, and make obeisance to it. I have made old Father Thames a fine easy grass slope, to walk up as far as he pleases upon my lawn, and this has put him in such good-humour that after staying a very short time there, he walks quickly back again, without doing me the least injury.

We came here last Wednesday, travelling like the old patriarchs, with all our household, and our herds, and our flocks (that is, one Alderney cow), and found this country and our little domain in high bloom and beauty. All our alterations and improvements are now finished, and they answer to admira-

tion. I shall have no peace till you see my walks, and lawns, and groves, and haunted streams, and become as well acquainted with my naiads and my dryads here as you are with their elder sisters at Fulham.

We heard of your alarm at Cowslip Green, and congratulate you most cordially on your providential escape. We agree entirely with a certain elegant textuary, that it is of the Lord's mercies that you were not consumed.

The Birmingham riot was an unfortunate thing. I do not love any thing so like the savages and the Poissards of France. The mob may sometimes *think* right, but they always *act* wrong. I am certainly extremely sorry to see them take the administration of justice into their own hands.

Have you seen the Life of Thomas Paine? if not, pray send for it immediately. It is curious, entertaining, and authentic. That life and the pamphlet (which I enclose to you under another cover) are the best antidotes I have seen to the poison of his publication; they ought to be printed in cheap penny pamphlets, and dispersed over the kingdom.

Accept Mrs. Porteus's affectionate compliments, and be assured that no one can entertain for you a more sincere regard than,

Dear madam,
Your faithful and devoted servant,
B. LONDON.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1791.

So kind and pleasant a letter as yours, my dear friend, ought to have been acknowledged immediately; but now a few days' delay have produced unforeseen events, which have scarcely left me spirits to write. I think of Birmingham as soon as I am awake; not that I have any friends there, or thereabout, or that I deal in politics, for I hate the subject, but I love peace, and order, and mutual good-will, and most heartily join in your prayers, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by God's providence, that his faithful people may serve Him in godly quietness. But where are the faithful people? Where are those that devote themselves to his service? Alas! there is the mischief! restless and discontented in the midst of his bounties, they stir up strife and inflame the heads of those who should be gathering them, and now how dreadfully is the misery fallen upon themselves! Last week we were in fear of *celebrations* in London, and probably there would have been commotions, had not prudent care and precautions preceded; but little did we think of celebrations in the provinces —why any? Methinks it is like celebrating with joy the anniversary of an earthquake, which should rather be remembered with penitence; for whatever state of happiness France

may arrive at (and God grant she may), surely there is none yet. Indeed, my dear friend, I am a perfect Cassandra respecting these internal commotions; what malignity, what animosity will they cause! From differing modes of Christianity, *they* say,—alas! from no Christianity at all. The worthy people whom we call Presbyterians used to decline all celebrations; they never would celebrate the ascension of our Saviour or the conversion of St. Paul; why then must they commemorate the demolition of the Bastile! Oh for a Doddridge or an Orton among them! If these were their guides, Dr. Priestly would not have to lament the spoiling of his goods and the destruction of his house.

My dear friend, I hope you have taken an uncommon portion *de l'esprit de notre bien heureux** this summer, and have read many of his excellent chapters to defend you against vanity, else how did you escape it when you found yourself entertaining, informing, instructing, edifying, all Austria, Bohemia, Wallachia, Transylvania, Bavaria, Sclavonia, Styria, Prussia, and Pomerania!† But I correct myself,—those who are capable of such great things are never vain, but give the praise to Him from whom every good and perfect gift cometh. If I had the book before me I could quote some speech of Daniel or David sweetly expressing this. I suppose it is impossible to tempt you eastward so soon as October, else with very pleasant rides in the morning, good tough reading in the evening, writing and discoursing, we should, I assure you, be quite surprised that November was coming so soon. I *have been* so, but now I am old, and therefore very apt to say,

> "That all the happiness mankind can gain
> Is not in pleasure, but in rest from pain."

So that if I have good health, and good fires, and good news from my children, the autumn passes most pleasantly with a friend in the house. But where shall I find such an one as you? Are you planting more gardens in the country, or are you planting more wreaths for yourself? *enfin que faites vous?* Pray tell me.

Yours, my dear friend,
Very affectionately,
F. B.

* Francois de Sales.

† This was a pleasantry upon some of Miss More's works being translated into German.

CHAPTER VI.

During the summer of the year 1791, the sisters resided altogether at Cowslip Green, and recognising the hand of the Almighty in the success of their undertaking at Cheddar, they resolved upon attempting an extension of their benevolent efforts by setting forward other schools in the neighbourhood. The difficulties they had to surmount appear in a regular and simple journal kept at the time. Some of the opulent farmers to whom they applied in making their extensive rounds, received them with civility; but, upon opening their business, assured them that the novelties they were introducing would be the ruin of agriculture. Others, more favourably disposed, told them that they had read something about Sunday-schools in the Bristol papers, and believed they might be very good things for keeping children from robbing their orchards. And, upon the whole, as it was distinctly announced that no subscriptions would be called for, they were met by the farmers with less hostility than they had expected. Two mining villages at the top of Mendip particularly attracted their attention. These were ignorant and depraved even beyond those of Cheddar,—so ignorant as to apprehend a design to make money by carrying off their children for slaves. The place was considered as so ferocious that no constable would venture there to execute his office; and these bold instructresses were warned by their friends that they were bringing their own lives into danger. They were not, however, to be deterred by any consideration of personal danger; and beginning to perceive who was helping them, by the solid improvement which was spreading around them, and particularly by an increasing attendance at church, they did not rest till they had procured the same benefits for no less than ten parishes in the neighbourhood where there were no resident clergymen. Their first step upon entering each parish was to obtain from the incumbent of the living his acquiescence in their interference, which was generally granted with alacrity; and in a short time the number of children under their instruction rather exceeded twelve hundred.

The distance to many of the schools was great; one of them was even fifteen miles from their residence; so that they were obliged to sleep in the neighbourhood during the period of their visitation. It cannot be supposed that their own funds were adequate to such very enlarged undertakings; and it is due to their friends to observe, that they obtained a

ready assistance from such of them as were in circumstances to afford it. Their evening readings, which consisted of a printed prayer, a plain sermon (read always by one of the sisters when her health permitted) and a psalm, were found to to be productive of effects the most strikingly beneficial. It seems that an adversary had endeavoured to give to the worthy rector of one of the most populous of these villages an unfavourable impression of this part of their plan; but this gentleman, at his annual visit to his parish, having visited the school, talked with the mistress, and examined the children, found reason to commend and applaud the manner in which these readings were conducted, and to approve the books selected for the purpose.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

1791.

MY DEAR SIR,

Perhaps it is the best answer to your question, to describe the origin and progress of one of our schools, detached from the rest. And I select Cheddar, which you were the immediate cause of our taking up. After the discoveries made of the deplorable state of that place, my sister and I went and took a lodging at a little public-house there, to see what we could do, for we were utterly at a loss how to begin. We found more than two thousand people in the parish, almost all very poor; no gentry; a dozen wealthy farmers, hard, brutal, and ignorant. We visited them all, picking up at one house (like fortune-tellers) the name and character of the next. We told them we intended to set up a school for their poor. They did not like it. We assured them we did not desire a shilling from them, but wished for their concurrence, as we knew they could influence their workmen. One of the farmers seemed pleased and civil; he was rich, but covetous, a hard drinker, and his wife a woman of loose morals, but good natural sense; she became our friend sooner than some of the decent and the formal, and let us a house, the only one in the parish, at 7*l.* per annum, with a good garden. Adjoining to it was a large ox-house; this we roofed and floored, and, by putting in a couple of windows, it made a good school-room. While this was doing, we went to every house in the place, and found every house a scene of the greatest ignorance and vice. We saw but one Bible in all the parish, and that was used to prop a flower-pot. No clergyman had resided in it for forty years. One rode over, three miles from Wells, to preach once on a Sunday, but no weekly duty was done, or sick persons visited, and children were often buried without any funeral service. Eight people in the morning, and twenty in the afternoon, was a good congregation. We spent our whole time in getting at the characters of all the people, the employment, wages, and

number of every family; and this we have done in our other nine parishes. On a fixed day, of which we gave notice in the church, every woman, with all her children above six years old, met us. We took an exact list from their account, and engaged one hundred and twenty to attend on the following Sunday. A great many refused to send their children unless we would pay them for it; and not a few refused, because they were not sure of my intentions, being apprehensive that at the end of seven years, if they attended so long, I should acquire a power over them, and send them beyond sea. I must have heard this myself in order to believe that so much ignorance existed out of Africa. While this was going on, we had set every engine at work to find proper teachers. On this every thing depended. I had the happiness to find a woman of excellent natural sense, great knowledge of the human heart, activity, zeal, and uncommon piety. She had had a good fortune for one in middling life, but a wicked son had much reduced it. She had, however, still an estate of 40*l.* a year, or very nearly. She brought with her a daughter, twenty-five years old, quite equal to herself in all other points; in capacity superior.

It was winter, and we all met at the school on Sunday morning at nine o'clock, having invited many parents to be present at the opening. We had drawn up some rules, which were read, then some suitable portions of Scripture, part of the 34th Psalm, then a hymn sung, and then a prayer read, composed for the occasion.

For the first year these excellent women had to struggle with every kind of opposition, so that they were frequently tempted to give up their laborious employ. They well entitled themselves to 30*l.* per annum salary, and some little presents. We established a weekly school of thirty girls, to learn reading, sewing, knitting, and spinning. The latter, though I tried three sorts, and went myself to almost every clothing town in the county, did not answer,—partly from the exactions of the manufacturer, and partly from its not suiting the genius of the place. They preferred knitting after the school hours on week-days. The mother or daughter visited the sick, chiefly with a view to their spiritual concerns; but we concealed the true motive at first; and in order to procure them access to the houses and hearts of the people, they were furnished, not only with medicine, but with a little money, which they administered with great prudence. They soon gained their confidence, read and prayed to them; and in all respects did just what a good clergyman does in other parishes.

At the end of a year we perceived that much ground had been gained among the poor; but the success was attended with no small persecution from the rich, though some of them grew more favourable. I now ventured to have a sermon

read after school on a Sunday evening, inviting a few of the parents, and keeping the grown-up children; the sermons were of the most awakening sort, and soon produced sensible effect. It was at first thought a very methodistical measure, and we got a few broken windows; but quiet perseverance, and the great prudence with which the zeal of our good mistresses was regulated, carried us through. Many reprobates were, by the blessing of God, awakened, and many swearers and Sabbath-breakers reclaimed. The numbers both of young and old scholars increased, and the daily life and conversation of many seemed to keep pace with their religious profession on the Sunday.

We now began to distribute Bibles, Prayer-books, and other good books, but never at random, and only to those who had given some evidence of their loving and deserving them. They are always made the reward of superior learning, or some other merit, as we can have no other proof that they will be read. Those who manifest the greatest diligence, get the books of most importance. During my absence in the winter, a great many will learn twenty or thirty chapters, Psalms and hymns. At the end of three years, during the winter, the more serious of the parents began to attend on a Wednesday night; and on Tuesday nights, twenty or thirty young people of superior piety met at the school to read the Scriptures, and hear them explained.

Finding the wants and distresses of these poor people uncommonly great (for their wages are but 1*s*. per day), and fearing to abuse the bounty of my friends by too indiscriminate liberality, it occurred to me that I could make what I had to bestow go much further, by instituting clubs or societies for the women, as is done for men in other places. It was no small trouble to accomplish this; for though the subscription was only three half-pence a week, it was more than they could always raise; yet the object appeared so important, that I found it would be good economy privately to give widows and other very poor women money to pay their club. After combating many prejudices, we carried this point, which we took care to involve in the general system, by making it subservient to the schools, the rules of the club restraining the women to such and such points of conduct respecting the schools. In some parishes we have one hundred and fifty poor women thus associated; you may guess who are the patronesses.

We have an anniversary feast of tea, and I get some of the clergy, and a few of the better sort of people to come to it. We wait on the women, who sit and enjoy their dignity. The journal and state of affairs is read after church; and we collect all the facts we can as to the conduct of the villagers; whether the church has been more attended, fewer or more frauds, less or more swearing, scolding, or Sabbath-breaking. All this is produced for or against them, in battle array, in a

little sort of sermon made up of praise, censure, and exhortation, as they may be found to have merited.

One rule is, that any girl bred in the school, who continues when grown up to attend its instructions, and has married in the past year with a fair character, is presented on this day with five shillings, a pair of white stockings, and a new Bible; and several very good girls have received this public testimony to their virtuous conduct. Out of this club (to which we find it cheaper to contribute a few guineas than to give at random), a sick woman receives 3*s*. a week, 7*s*. 6*d*. for a lying-in, &c. &c.

We are now in our sixth year at Cheddar, and two hundred children, and above two hundred old people constantly attend. God has blessed the work beyond all my hopes. The farmer's wife (our landlady) is become one of the most eminent Christians I know; and though we had last year the great misfortune to lose our elder mistress, her truly Christian death was made the means of confirming many in piety; and the daughter proceeds in the work with great ability. She has many teachers under her, who are paid 1*s*. a Sunday. Once a year each young person receives some articles of dress; but having so many other schools to run away with our money, we cannot do quite so much for any as I could wish. I should add, that we have about twenty young men, apprentices, servants, &c. who attend the whole Sunday with the humility of little children; and these, as they try hard to get a few clothes, we think it right to help with a small present. Among the collateral advantages resulting from the clubs, one is, that the women who used to plead that they could not go to church, because they had no clothes, now come. The necessity of going to church in procession with us on the anniversary, raises an honest ambition to get something decent to wear, and the churches on Sunday are now filled with very clean-looking women. Perhaps a loose sketch of expenses may not be amiss; it is not accurate; I have no papers here.

	£	s.	d.
House-rent,	7	0	0
Repairs, white-washing, benches, &c.	2	0	0
Salary, head mistress,	30	0	0
Under-teachers,	10	0	0
Bibles, Prayers, and other books,	10	0	0
Caps and tippets, 100 girls, &c.	8	0	0
Shoes and stockings for 80 girls, &c.	15	0	0
Shirts, 20 young men,	5	0	0
Club subscriptions and expenses,	6	0	0
Incidental charities,	6	0	0
	£99	0	0

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

Cowslip Green, August 2, 1791.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I had been meditating a letter to you long before I received yours, but that *one thing or another*, which we so constantly hear pleaded, was continually suggesting to me to defer doing, what might have been done in much less time than was actually spent in the deliberation, the resolution, and the delay.

And so this letter will actually find you in the principality, and with the *Prince* of Durham; I rejoice with you that so much power and wealth are so worthily bestowed. It is an awful account which so high a trust involves. In the hands of our excellent friends, it will, I believe and trust, be an instrument of good to many, and I hope to themselves also, or I would not wish it to them, as desirable as it may be thought.

My health, about which you kindly inquire, has been, as usual, of all sorts of descriptions: I am endeavouring to make a little use of a tolerably good interval which I now have, in setting a going some new works, at so considerable a distance from me, as to require rather more strength and spirits than I commonly have. For some of them being nine or ten miles from my cottage, and having no carriage, I often contrive to get so tired before I come to the field of action, that my exertions when there are not worth much. Do not *pity* me for this, for it is only momentary fatigue, and does not do me any essential harm; and I am so far from speaking of it either in the way of boast or complaint, that I rather like it; only I sometimes regret that my parishes, of which I have now nine in hand, lie so far asunder that it prevents turning my time to so good account as that of those who have the same number under their immediate eye in a town.

Lest you should hear from any other quarter that my *thatched* house has been on fire, and be more alarmed for me than is necessary, I mention it myself. All night did it burn silently through the beams of the kitchen ceiling; and when I was roused in the morning with the cry of fire, it had not far to penetrate through to Patty's bed, who was insensible of her danger; providentially daylight, and there being not a breath of air, saved us; for in a few minutes our water, all drawn from a deep bucket-well, was exhausted. The damage, thank God, is inconsiderable; and the only inconvenience was, that we could not use the kitchen for about a week, which it took to repair it. I hope I shall remember this great deliverance.

Oh! you have no notion what a country this is. In a parish where I opened a school of 108 on Sunday sennight, there were not any boys or girls of any age whom I asked that

could tell me who made them. I suppose the north of England is much better, at least I have always heard so.

Pray present my kindest respects to the Bishop of Durham and Mrs. Barrington, and tell them that though honours are not always pleasures, I feel that they are very much so in *their* kind attention to me, and that I know what a loss I have when I am not able to avail myself of their goodness.

I have kept this scrawl some days for want of time to finish it—so busy have we been in preparing for a grand celebrity, distinguished by the pompous name of *Mendip Feast;* the range of hills you remember in this country; on the top of which we yesterday gave a dinner of beef, and plum-pudding, and cider, to our schools. There were not 600 children, for I would not admit the *new* schools, telling them they must be good for a year or two, to be entitled to so great a thing as a dinner. We had two tents pitched on the hill, our cloth was spread around, and we were enclosed in a fence, within which, in a circle, the children sat. We all went in wagons; and carried a large company of our own to carve for the children, who sung Psalms very prettily in the intervals. Curiosity had drawn a great multitude, for a country so thinly peopled; one wondered whence five thousand people, for that was the calculation, could come. I was very uneasy at seeing this, lest it should disturb the decorum of the festivity. Almost all the clergy of the neighbourhood came, and I desired a separate minister to say grace to each parish. At the conclusion, I permitted a general chorus of "God save the King," telling them I expected that loyalty should make a part of their religion. We all parted with the most perfect peace, having fed about nine hundred people for less than a *fine* dinner for twenty costs. The day was the finest imaginable, and we got home safe, and I hope thankful, about eight miles in our wagons. Write me all about Durham.

Yours ever,
H. More.

Miss H. More to a Friend.

Bath, January 1, 1792.

My dear Madam,

May this year and many succeeding years open and close upon you with health, and peace, and comfort, and add both to your usefulness and your happiness. In looking back myself upon the past year, I see so much to be thankful for, that my heart is full of gratitude; and so much to be humbled for, that it is full of sorrow and self-abasement. The waters, I think, are doing me good, and I have been very much better since I came to close winter-quarters, owing, under God, to my being quite shut up; well as I love air and exercise, the loss of them is but a petty sacrifice to what many are called to make; and

as I have no avocation at present which makes it a duty for me to run risks by going out, I am thankful to be furnished with so good a pretence for returning no visits; and also for the prospect of laying in a little health for future services; for I have partly pledged myself, in my own mind, if I live and have health and money, and the French do not come, to take up two new parishes next spring; but as they are four miles below Cheddar, I have never dared reveal my intention to any one. I know sloth and self-love will say often, "spare thyself," and I feel the extreme concern it will give to those to whom I would wish to give nothing but pleasure; but I have *counted the cost*. These parishes are large and populous; they are as dark as Africa, and I do not like the thought, that at the day of judgment, any set of people should be found to have perished through ignorance, who were within my possible reach, and only that I might have a little more ease. I will not say that I am not at times discouraged from this idea; for example, this last week, when, for all my boasting, I have been laid by with five or six days of nervous headache. As the waters evidently agree with me, I am trying to *compel* myself to the extravagance of chair-hire, without which I cannot drink them to any advantage.

All things considered, I like your sentiments on the subject of St. Paul's. 'Such a little sacrifice, now and then, not only serves as an example to others, but, rightly used, is a little evidence to one's self of the state of one's own mind. To persons, however, like you and Mr ——, whose natural bias I think is not on the side of levity and gayety, less vigilance is perhaps necessary on these points. Even to me, whose natural taste *is* rather on that side, I think I can say, that when the gay society and splendid scenes ceased in some measure to be a snare, they became a burthen to me; so that now I have more merit in sometimes practising occasional conformity to them, than I have in flying from them; this last being really as far as I am judge of myself, the indulgence.

As to myself, my days are sadly laid open to the inroads of all manner of invaders of time. As it is known I return no visits, I am therefore supposed to be always at home. *Now* a party comes, recommended by some friend, these must be seen for the friend's sake. Then come some old friends of my own. Now and then, indeed, there is a little chance of being useful, and I feel obliged to lend myself to the most distant claim of this sort. Of a few young ladies I have some sort of hope; but in general it is an unpleasant loss of time. I am sick of the turbulent politics of ignorant *politicians;* of rancour, violence, and misrepresentation.

This sort of unprofitable talk secularizes, unhinges, and discomposes my mind, because I see so much prejudice and so little truth and candour on either side, yet all speak as confidently of things they know nothing about, as if they were in

the cabinet. Bath, happy Bath, is as gay as if there were no war, nor sin, nor misery in the world! We run about all the morning, lamenting the calamities of the times, anticipating our ruin, reprobating the taxes, and regretting the general dissipation; and every night we are running into every excess, to a degree unknown in calmer times. Yet it is the fashion to affect to be religious, and to show it by inveighing against the wickedness of France! I really know many who believe they are pious on no other ground.

Adieu, my dear madam, I will finish with the apostolic benediction: "Grow in grace, and in the love and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Yours very affectionately,
H. More.

To the same from the same.

Wednesday, 1792.

My dear Madam,

When I wrote to Mr. T. about setting up a new school, I did not at all know of the scenes which have since opened upon us. I then only meant a little scheme in Shaw's parish, which would not require a great deal of our personal attention; but if the *new* plan be put in practice, it will probably be the largest thing we have ever undertaken, and if it be *not* large, it would not be worth the great distance, difficulty, and expense attending it. I desired Mr. W. to communicate it to *you*. Now pray tell *him* that on Sunday we went down to reconnoitre, and if any thing ever *can* be done, it must be through the very fire. We had borrowed the pulpit for a friend, but the opposition we met with so damped his sanguine spirits that he had not courage to preach, because he said his indignation would make him imprudent, and his imprudence would make me angry. B——, however, had prepared a very judicious sermon. And Patty and I, though not more convinced than he of human depravity as a doctrine, yet being longer accustomed to its practical effects, were hardly moved at all. The great man of the place, illiterate but very sensible, is a shrewd speculative *atheist*. The next, a farmer of 1000*l.* a year, let us know that we should not come there to make his ploughmen wiser men than himself; he did not want saints, but workmen. His wife, who, though she cannot read, seems to understand the doctrine of philosophical necessity, said, "The lower class were *fated* to be poor, and ignorant, and wicked; and that as wise as *we* were, we could not alter what was *decreed*." To this the husband subjoined, "Very true; besides he liked the parish very well as it was: if the young men *did* come and gamble before his house of a Sunday evening, when they might as well do it farther off, it was only for him to go out and curse and swear at them, and they went away, and what could one desire more?" Before

we went to church, all these encouraging and ingenious things were conveyed to us; and during the prayers I took out my pencil and wrote across the church to B——, to be sure to insert in his sermon that the *ladies* would defray all the *expenses* —that they wanted nothing of the parish but their countenance, desiring that after service the approvers of the institution would stay to give their support, and the enemies to propose their objections. This bright thought had a most happy effect. B—— repeated three times that no *subscriptions* would be asked, and every heart was cheered, and every eye brightened. We had, after sermon, an hour or two of discussion in the church.

Poor Fry had been so shocked at such to him new instances of depravity, that he said not a word, but looked ready to faint. The opposers were, however, by this time so softened, that several actually got warm enough to declare they had *no objection* to the ladies coming; and one rich man clapped his hands and declared he believed it would turn out a very good *job*. It was affecting in the mean time to see the poor stand trembling behind lest the project should fail.

The sun shines in at my window, but I dare not be tempted by its blandishments, but am still a close prisoner.

I thought to have sent a line to Mr. T., but I have done my *possible* in writing for to-day.

Monday afternoon.

Alas! the poor Africans. Grieved as I was at the loss of the question, I could not help laughing at Canning's speech, which really had a great deal of wit. As to Pitt, I could have hugged him, to borrow Patty's constant phrase when she is pleased with anybody.

Our village of Shipham has suffered dreadfully from a raging fever; we lost seven in two days, several of them our poor children. Figure to yourself such a visitation in a place where a single cup of broth cannot be obtained; for there is none to give, if it would save a life. I am ashamed of *my* comforts when I think of *their* wants; one widow, to whom we allow a little pension, burned her only table for firing; another, one of her three chairs. I had the comfort, however, of knowing that poor Jones distributed what we sent most conscientiously, and ran the risk of walking into the pits with which the place abounds, and which were so covered by snow that he was near being lost. "No words," he wrote me, "could describe the sensations of this poor village at seeing a wagon-load of coal we sent enter the place!" I feel indignant to think that so small a sum can create such feelings, when one knows what sums one has wasted. Most providentially we had a most respectable mistress at the school, who entered so tenderly into their wants that they would send to fetch her at midnight, and she supplied all the sick with broth, medicine, &c.

To the same.

Cowslip Green, 1792.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Patty has been very poorly indeed, but the weather for the last ten days has enabled us to prosecute our labours with more ease. I ought thankfully to acknowledge that, on the whole, our work is going on prosperously. Who does not clearly see that the work is entirely God's own doing, when he is pleased to do it by such poor instruments. It seems a paradox to say that we have more difficulty and anxiety now in this advanced stage of our progress than we had six or seven years ago; and that we have most to do now in those parishes where, by the blessing of God, we have seen the greatest improvement. But so it is. There is great delicacy required in the management of our young converts. Some of them are very sincere, devout, and holy in their lives, but now and then fall into a zeal so fiery that it wants cooling; and then they relapse into dejection and sadness, on finding that earth is not heaven; and that they must submit to carry about with them human infirmity, and be still struggling against sin and temptation, as long as they live in this world. I have, however, the comfort to say, that hardly any of them have fallen back into sinful courses, and many, I trust, very many, are striving after excellence. It is curious to see the ignorant and undisciplined mind falling into the same errors, and deviating into the same eccentricities with philosophers and divines. Some of our poor youths, who did not know their letters when we took them in hand, have fallen into some of the peculiarities of William Law, without ever having heard that there was such a man in the world; and I fear they judge unfavourably of my zeal, because I have refused to publish a severe edict against the sin *of wearing flowers;* which would be ridiculous enough in me who so passionately love them. I find it necessary in some instances to encourage cheerfulness, as austerities are insisted on by some of them, rather of a serious nature. Two young and very pious persons, who are over head and ears in love with each other, and whom I strenuously exhort to marry, will not hear of it. They say they can serve God better as they are, and this would be very well, only that while they refuse my injunctions to marry, they are spending almost all their time together; and though I verily believe that both of them would rather die than commit any wilful sin, yet I have found it difficult to impress on them the evil of giving room for scandal; however, I think they are at last convinced of the danger of reposing too much on their own innocence.

The excellent young collier who was so cruelly maimed by the pit falling in upon him, I have been sadly puzzled what to do with. He has too good talents to be sent back to the pit,

the damps of which also threatened him with insanity; so I have sent him to a good school, to add writing and arithmetic to his religious knowledge, and I hope to be able to set him up as a schoolmaster for the sons of farmers and tradesmen on week-days, and for the poor people on Sundays; but he will be a good while upon hand, though he now walks twelve miles on Saturday nights to assist at one of our schools.

One great object in our establishment of the poor women's clubs has been to back with penal statutes the religious instruction of the schools. This summer I have had the satisfaction of seeing the first dawn of hope on a subject of great difficulty and delicacy. My young women who were candidates for the bridal presents which I bestow on the virtuous, gravely refused to associate with one who had been guilty of gross conduct; whereas it used to afford matter for horrid laughter and disgusting levity. It was a very trying matter to me, for I thought it my duty at one of our late anniversaries, in presence of three hundred people and half a dozen clergy, to deliver a solemn remonstrance on this very subject.

I did not think myself at liberty to be excused, for it was a matter paramount to all misplaced delicacy, and I had the pleasure of witnessing the most becoming gravity and exact decorum in that part of my audience which I most feared, when I excluded from the pale of our establishment a female offender. It was a comfort that she had not been one of our disciples. No small difficulty then remained, to prevent the others from being vain of their virtue, and to convince them that though *she* had been singularly bad, there was nothing very meritorious in their goodness.

The worst of our business is, that having so many places, and all at a good distance from each other, to look after,—when all goes smoothly in one place, something breaks out in another, and hinders the instruction of the children and parents. The teaching of the teachers is not the least part of the work; add to this, that having about thirty masters and mistresses, with under-teachers, one has continually to bear with the faults, the ignorance, the prejudices, humours, misfortunes, and *debts* of all those poor well-meaning people. I hope, however, that it teaches one forbearance, and it serves to put me in mind how much God has to bear with from me. I now and then comfort Patty in our journeys home at night, by saying that if we do these people no good, I hope we do some little good to ourselves.

I should not send such petty details to any one else, but as you are engaged in the same warfare, and will, I trust, be doing good long after I am forgotten, I thought you might pick up some encouragement from knowing the difficulties which have been encountered by those who have trodden the same path before you.

I had a kind message for you from Lady —— lately, hoping

she shall see you and Mr. —— late in the autumn, but you will hear from her first. I have had several letters from her, but have never sent her a single line; quite brutal this, for she has claims to my kindness, because she is not happy otherwise. I desire to have little to do with the great. I have devoted the remnant of my life to the poor, and those that have no helper; and if I can do them little good, I can at least sympathize with them, and I know it is some comfort for a forlorn creature to be able to say, "there is something that cares for me." That simple idea of being *cared for*, has always appeared to me a very cheering one. Besides this, the affection they have for me is a strong engine with which to lift them to the love of higher things: and though I believe others work successfully by terror, yet kindness is the instrument with which God has enabled me to work. Alas, I might do more and better: pray for me that I may.

Yours very affectionately,

H. More.

From Miss More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Bath, 1792.

I think it right that you and Mr. W—— should know what a sad spirit sets these new seceders at work. You may depend on the truth of the enclosed. They do not now so much go to places which are in darkness and ignorance as they once professed to do, but rather where the gospel is preached, in order to draw people away from the church and state. I imagine they will quite knock up our labours at Cheddar, but we must strive the harder. I leave you to judge whether they are wanted at that place. Poor D—— preaches most faithfully to them on Sundays, and gives them a lecture in the church on Tuesday evenings, all for 25*l.* per annum. *We* have at school a sermon on Sunday evening, with a more select meeting of the most serious on Wednesdays: add to this, that both D—— and our excellent Mrs. T. at the school have their doors open at all seasons to the distressed or inquiring. The sectaries are more inflamed against me than the high church bigots; such an inconvenience is it to belong to no party, and so discreditable is moderation. A high-flier (a friend too) told me the other day, he would advise me to publish a short confession of my faith, as my attachment both to the religion and the government of the country had become questionable to many persons. I own I was rather glad to hear it, as I was afraid I had leaned too strongly to the other side, and had sometimes gone out of my way to show on which side my bias lay.

I had not room in my letter to Mrs. —— to tell her a true story recently transacted in London. A lady gave a very great children's ball: at the upper end of the room, in an elevated place, was dressed out a figure to represent *me*, with a

large rod in my hand prepared to punish such naughty doings Mrs. Holroyd has a letter from London describing this.

Ever yours sincerely,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Bath, 1792.

My dear Madam,

I have brought home with me the broken-hearted sister of Miss Bird, whose eyes I have just closed, and who completed her pious course at six-and-twenty. Within a few hours, and not a hundred yards distant, died my much honoured friend Dr. Horne, Bishop of Norwich, whose end was peace and piety. His mind being a good deal hurt by his disorder (water on the chest), rambled much at intervals; but the instant any religious exercise was proposed, he was perfectly sound, composed, and happy: his very rambling showed the habit of his mind; it was all praise and devotion. Mr. Hume perhaps would have excepted against his last words, which were, "Blessed Jesus!" he then sunk to rest without a sigh. His pious and afflicted widow removed to our house while the last sad ceremonies were performing, and staid some days shut up in an apartment, where she scarcely saw anybody but me, our other mourner being in another apartment.

As I contemplated the dead body of my beloved bishop, which I did several times, I could not help reflecting to what a mind it had belonged, so wise and so witty, so pleasant and so pious. I am thankful to Providence for giving me the opportunity of being in the smallest degree instrumental to the comfort of these sufferers; I am not afraid that these scenes will affect me too much; my fear is, that the impression may escape before it has wrought its full benefit upon the soul. I know your goodness for me, my dear madam, will make you glad to hear I was not the worse for these little exertions. Let me recommend to you a very little book, written by Mr. Cecil, called "A Visit to the House of Mourning," as a very proper little tract to keep by one to give away to friends under affliction. I have often been in want of such a thing, when asked to recommend something, and find this more suitable and less exceptionable than most others that have fallen in my way; the style too being rather elegant, will recommend the matter.

I did not visit Madame de Sillery, alias Genlis. I was ill the whole time she was at Bath; and to say truth, the edge of my inclination towards her is much taken off. I have the same admiration of her talents, but very little veneration for her person; *et—l'un ne va pas loin sans l'autre.*

I have often cast a thought, but I begin now to cast an eye towards my many pleasant and kind friends assembled together in London. I look forward to the pleasure of appearing among

you in a week or two. May I then find you, my dear madam, enjoying health, and peace, and comfort in all your dear and multiplied connexions. I congratulated you in heart and mind, though not with pen and ink, on the birth of a little Plantagenet. Adieu, my dear madam, ever affectionately

Yours,
H. M.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

Bath, 1792.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I hope your mind is somewhat prepared for the sad news I have to impart to you. But your mind is so schooled and broken in to losses and afflictions, that I believe it is always in some degree of preparedness to receive them. You will too naturally conclude that this is a prelude to the closing scene of our beloved friend the Bishop of Norwich. He was so much better four or five days ago as to be in the pump-room without his servant, and I was expecting every day that they would send for me to sit an evening with him, he being always out in a morning. But having neglected to send to inquire rather longer than usual, Patty called yesterday, and found him actually dying. He had just received the sacrament with his family, with extraordinary devotion; every word he uttered, every text he repeated, consisted of praise and the most devout thankfulness. He took leave of all separately, exhorted and blessed them. Patty begged to have a last look at him, which, as his eyes were shut, she could do without disturbing him. She did not see the ladies, but had the comfort to hear that Mrs. Horne was extremely resigned and composed. This morning, at eight, she called again, and found that all was most happily over. She only saw his man, who told her that about two, I think, he calmly pronounced the words, "Blessed Jesus!" stretched himself out, and expired with the utmost tranquillity. She saw him again; which I intend to do, as a lesson of deep instruction. A more delightful or edifying death-bed cannot well be imagined. I wished to have been of some use to poor Mrs. Horne; but as the chaplain, Mrs. Selby, and her daughters are all with her, I imagine she wants no assistance; only the maid Betty said she thought her mistress would be glad if I would write to Mrs. Kennicott. This I should naturally have done.

We *ought* to rejoice that he is released from a painful and burdensome body; and surely we *do* rejoice that his death was so consistent with his life, and that he honoured his Christian profession with his dying breath.

How wise and how witty, how pleasant and how good he was, we shall often remember. I, and indeed all of us, have been for near three weeks closely engaged in another trium-

phant death-bed scene, for such it *must* prove. You heard me speak, I think, of two young ladies of uncommon parts and piety, cousins to Mrs. Wilberforce, settled at Bath, quite alone in a lodging, of course wanting friendship and attention. One of these has been dying eighteen days, to all appearance; but in a manner more truly heroic and pious than any thing of the kind I ever witnessed. She talks of her departure constantly and with pleasure; and though when in health she was remarkably diffident and timid, she now exhorts, awakens, and instructs all who come near her; and tells them what a wretched state she should now be in, had she not a better righteousness than her own to trust to. I go to her in a chair every day, for I have never yet been free enough from a cough to walk out. It is a profitable attendance. Two such dying beds, so near each other, are not easy to be found.

The bishop, I learn, is to be deposited at Eltham; the family, I suppose, will remove directly. You will doubtless hear from themselves.

Adieu. God bless you! May you and I be prepared.

Yours affectionately,

H. More.

From Miss H. More to a Friend. (Extract.)

1792.

I cannot forbear remarking to you and Mrs. ——, what has lately so forcibly struck myself, I mean the transforming power of the Christian religion. It seems literally to have new-made the very tempers and constitutions of those who have lately fallen under my particular attention. Mrs. ——, the most dejected, humble, I had almost said helpless woman I ever knew, animated with this divine principle, seemed another creature; was active, cheerful, useful as long as her husband needed her services. Though the tenderest of wives, she revealed to him his danger, and supported him in his religious preparations with a fortitude quite foreign to her natural character. She read hours on his coffin, and made me read the burial service to her.

Miss H——, shy, reserved, cold, and so hesitating in her natural manner that few ever discovered, what a great intimacy enabled me to discover, a most accomplished mind, hid behind a thick veil of humility,—acquired in the near views of death and eternity, a sort of righteous courage, an animated manner, and a ready eloquence, which were all used as means for awakening and striking others. This extraordinary change was manifested in various ways during the eighteen days in which she was given over, but shone out with complete lustre the last night of her life.

It may be more profitable to consider the behaviour exhibited in her last hours, as the make of her mind particularly ex-

empted her from the charge of enthusiasm. There was little ardour in her temper, her affections were rather languid, and there was not an atom of fever in her complaint; so that her head was never more clear, nor her judgment more sound. When I expressed my concern that her sufferings were prolonged, she said she saw clearly the wisdom of that dispensation; for that if she had been taken away in the beginning of her illness, she should have wanted much of that purification she now felt, and of those clear and strong views which now supported her. She once observed, that it was a strange situation to be an inhabitant of no world; for that she was done with this, and was not yet permitted to enter upon a better. In the night on which she died, she called us all about her, with an energy and spirit quite unlike herself. She cried out with an animated tone—"Be witnesses all of you, that I bear my dying testimony to my Christian profession. I am divinely supported, and have almost a foretaste of heaven: Oh! this is not pain but pleasure!" After this, she sunk into so profound a calm, that we thought her insensible. We were mistaken, however; for she had still strength enough to finish every favourite text I began: and to show how clear her intellects still were, when I misquoted, she set me right, though with a voice now scarcely intelligible. To perfect *her* faith, and to exercise *ours*, it pleased her heavenly Father to try her after this with one hour of suffering, as exquisite as ever human nature sustained; and I hope I shall never forget that when, in order to save myself the pang of seeing her unutterable agonies, I wrapped my face in the curtain, I heard her broken inarticulate voice repeatedly cry, "Let patience have its perfect work—though he slay me, yet will I trust in him—Thy will be done." This, with a fervent ejaculation to be kept from temptation, and the powers of darkness, she repeated till her strength failed. Her prayer was heard; and her last hour was so peaceful that we knew not when she sunk to her everlasting rest.

Two little things are worth recording, merely to show how consistent she was: for I am anxious to rescue such a deathbed from the imputation of enthusiastic fervours. She desired, if the physicians thought it might be useful for any future sufferer, that she might be opened; which was accordingly done. The other instance was, that early in the night, when I saw the pangs of death approaching, I had prevailed on her afflicted sister M—— to quit a scene she was so little able to bear. H—— begged to see her, and said she should like M—— to see her die. I represented to her how unfit her shattered nerves were to go through with it; and that if she should fall into fits, what should I do with both? She was convinced in a moment, begged she might not come, and only desired I would explain to the woman that her sister was doing her duty by staying away; that she did it because it was right, and not because she liked it. I ought not to omit remarking, that the

power of true Christianity has been no less conspicuous in Miss M——, whose humble submission to the Divine will is the more valuable in one of her extreme susceptibility and strong feelings; and that the parting is almost like that of soul and body; for Miss H—— was the mouth, and tongue, and organs, of which she was the informing spirit.

Extract from another letter on the same subject.

H—— has been dying since last night. I have held her clammy hand, and watched her still changing countenance all night. She is at this time speechless; so to get over a few heavy moments, I will try to write to you. Perhaps I may not send it. As soon as the terrifying symptoms came on, I gave poor M—— her opiate, and put her to bed: thank God she is pretty quiet. The silence about me is solemn, but not terrible. I feel rather elevated that, now every one of my friends is, I hope, asleep in peace, I am ministering to those two sisters, going backwards and forwards from the dying to the mourning chamber. Instead of fearing that this last scene should be too affecting, I am only dreading (such is the levity of my nature) that it will depart from my memory before it has done its errand on my heart. Till the last hour I have been whispering into her dying ear all the promises I can recollect. She is pleased at it—takes every sentence out of my mouth, and finishes it with her inarticulate voice.

Four o'clock. She has just had a moment of satisfaction more than human. Her pallid face was irradiated, and with a broken voice she declared she was almost in heaven. She blessed me rather with the compassionate energy of an angel than with the weakness of an expiring creature, and said some things from which your letter, just before received, seemed to allow me to take comfort. I then asked her if she had a blessing to send to Mr. —— and yourself; with the utmost fervour she prayed for you both, and then for the —— too.

Five o'clock. We have had a terrible hour. The mortal pangs are dreadful; my heart dies within me; I fear I cannot stand it: happily her poor sister does not hear: groans of agony beyond what my fears ever painted, and I have seen many dying beds. I go into the next room to spare myself a moment, and write to quiet myself. In the extremity of anguish she cries, "Thy will be done."

Six o'clock. She is alive, but the bitterness of death is past. All is peace; and my terrors have subsided so far as to enable me to keep my post. I dreaded being driven to a cowardly desertion. One is puzzled why such a conflict of body and spirit was necessary for her, but I can only repeat her own words, "Thy will be done." If she departs peacefully, I shall have cause enough for thankfulness.

Seven o'clock. She is departed peacefully: not a sigh.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1792.

No certainly, my dear friend, you did not write me a second letter. You have had far other subjects for your thoughts; or if you thought of me at all, I hope it was to pray for me.

> The chamber where the good man meets his fate
> Is privileged beyond the common walk
> Of virtuous life,—quite in the verge of heaven.

There you have been, my dear friend, and it is impossible to read your account of Miss Bird's and Bishop Horne's death, and not recall these lines. Your soul's health has been confirmed and strengthened, I doubt not; all I could wish is, that your bodily health were equally so.

You give us hope of being an eye-witness; but what do you call the spring, my dear madam? The lilacs are already budding, and the rose-leaves green in my garden; but there are such gardens with you, and such friends, that I fear you will be in no haste to come among us. You have saints too—(have we any?) Oh what a fine picture you have given me of one who in the morning of life did not cast a "longing lingering look behind." She looked only to the Author and Finisher of her faith; and how strong was that faith, and how blessed the hope it inspired! But I pity her sister—'tis the survivor dies! How well you must understand the office of comforter, with all its lenient arts. Indeed poor Mrs. Horne wanted one. Hers was a loss indeed; nor did she mourn alone. The church, and all its members that had but a spark of piety, lamented the Bishop of Norwich. When shall we have such another bishop to fill his vacancy? Those upon the bench, whom you love and honour (and I am sure love and honour you) do not forget to inquire after you. Adieu, my very dear friend,

Your truly affectionate and obliged

F. B.

CHAPTER VII.

HANNAH MORE's visits to London were now more contracted as her time became more engrossed in the interesting occupations in which we have lately seen her engaged; and in addition to this busy train of constant employment in promoting the improvement of the younger part of society, she was called upon to make an extraordinary exertion to rescue an unfortu-

nate young heiress, who had been trepanned away from school at the age of fourteen. She was led from circumstances to take a deep interest in this tragic event, and in her efforts to discover the unhappy victim, she was often engaged in harassing and terrifying situations (sometimes going about to search houses with armed Bow-street officers), to the great injury of her health and spirits. All efforts, however, proved fruitless, the poor girl having been betrayed into a marriage, and carried to the Continent. Miss M. had considered this object of so much importance as to sacrifice to it her time, her health, and the comforts of society, while there was any remaining hope of success. The following letter gives an interesting account of this transaction.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

London, April 23.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Could you form the faintest idea of the life I have led, the scenes I have been engaged in, and the company I have kept since I came to town, you would cease to wonder at my unnatural silence. The day after I came, my sister, overcome with hurry and anxiety, fell alarmingly ill, in a miserable lodging, taken only for the day, to be near Bow-street. I had not only to sit up with and nurse her, but the whole weight of this unhappy business fell on me, as an assistant to poor Miss M. My time has been literally passed with thief-takers, officers of justice, and such pretty kind of people. I have made no visits, but snatched a hasty dinner in Cavendish-square, or at London house, in my dishabille, and away again, and this only two days ago: so long had I been in town without seeing those dear friends. Others I have not seen. I will give you a little sketch of the manner of life I have been engaged in. When we had information brought us of any house where our unhappy child and her atrocious companion were supposed to be, Miss M—— and I were obliged to go under pretence of wanting lodgings. One lawyer went with us into the house to look at the rooms, another stood at the door: a hackney-coach full of Sir Sampson Wright's men at a little distance: to these we were directed to make signals in case we had discovered the object of our pursuit; our share in the business being to identify the dear little girl: the lawyers, with all their professional nonchalance, coolly directing us to betray no emotion, nor to discover ourselves in case we found them. You know, I believe, my silly terror of firearms—it is inexpressible. What therefore made these visits so particularly distressing to me was the assurance that P—— never sat without a pistol on the table, which he seized at every noise. Every morning presents some fresh pursuit, and every day closes in disappointment. You may believe that nothing would justify these exertions on our part but the deepest per-

suasion of the sweet child's innocence. It was the most timid, gentle, pious little thing! How far the endearments and flattery of a wretch, who they say is specious, may have corrupted her in five weeks, I tremble to think; but though I shall mourn, I shall not repent. Diligent pursuit is now making after them in France. I cannot drop this subject without naming the noble exertions of my friend Mr. H. T——, whose zeal and piety have made him take it up as the cause of justice. His labours and influence have done more than all the lawyers: he got the king's proclamation, did every thing with the secretary of state, and gave up every moment of his time which was not engaged in the other great cause, the abolition. Alas! we have lost that cause for the present.

I have hardly had an hour with Mrs. Garrick, but hope I shall soon. Tell Mr. Bryant he may venture to buy the Estimate. The truth is, though I was sorry to have it found out, I have never denied it when fairly asked. To affect secrecy about a thing that is known is absurd. I have never had time to see Cadell, nor do I know any thing about it. I hardly dare talk of engagements to Mrs. G. yet, as she has heard nothing of me; but I did hint to Mrs. Porteus that I hoped to go to Fulham the last week in May. I mention this to you in a general way. I shall be sorry to have it later. The Mongewell friends, too, are very pressing for us. I know not what to say. I lead such a life of uncertainty, I fear to promise myself any thing.

I am, my dear friend,
Yours very affectionately,
H. More.

From Miss H. More to her sister.

London, 1792.

Do you know I am become quite an ancient? I do not mean an old woman, but an old author; a copy of Bishop Bonner's Ghost having been sold the other day at Dr. Lort's sale for half a guinea, on account of its scarceness. Poor De Lolme has called upon me; he is in prison, but got leave to come so far. I have lodged, from myself and others, five guineas in Elmsley's hands, which he is to give him one at a time, without hinting that they came through me. He is, I fear, inconsiderate and forgetful of what becomes him; but so are some others, who yet have very good dinners to eat. I think it cruel that a foreigner, who has done so much honour to our country by his book on "The Constitution of England," which has been repeatedly quoted in both houses of Parliament, should be suffered to starve. On Saturday we had a political dinner at Mrs. Hare's;* Sir Charles Blagden and I opposed the adversaries of government with might and main. All the

* Daughter of Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph.

rest I think were on the other side. No! poor Mrs. Carter sat speechless with rage, at hearing of the perfections of the French, and of the oppressions and grievances of the English. I am just called down; Lord and Lady Mendip being below. I think I ought to go, out of respect to our mountains.

To the same.

London, 1792.

I could not go to Lord Fife's dinner, where I was invited to meet Messrs. Burke, Smelt, &c. My mind and time have been much engaged by a circumstance of which the story is too long for my short leisure; I will just give you a brief sketch.

I heard yesterday morning, by a person who was an eye-witness, that a fine young creature had thrown herself into the canal in St. James's Park, in a masquerade dress. She was taken up for dead, but by the usual means recovered, and carried to the Middlesex Hospital. Mrs. Clarke* and I resolved immediately to set out and see what could be done; when we got there, we found she had just been carried in a hackney-coach to her lodgings in a street of very bad fame. Nothing intimidated, we followed her: she came down to us looking deadly pale; her fine hair still drenched with the water; we told her we came as friends, and begged to know how we could serve her; she said her father had sold her at sixteen in the King's Bench, to a fellow-prisoner, after having given her a lady's education, which her language and manners confirmed;—that she was at present (to use their absurd term) under the *protection* of an officer of the Guards, to whom she was strongly attached;—that she had lately found he neglected her;—that he had gone the night before to the masquerade without her;—that, suspecting this, she had followed him;—that she had seen him there with another of her own sex; had fallen into fits, and made such an eclat that he was obliged to go back with her to her lodgings. Mrs. Clarke and I were so much affected by this story that we staid some hours with her, offered to provide for her if she would abandon her present mode of life, and at last prevailed upon her to quit her present lodging, engaging to pay her debts. She consented in an agony of mind, but when we had got her away, and thought ourselves sure of her, she would return once more, for the chance of seeing her betrayer; protesting we should hear of her again next day, which we did not believe; she kept her word, however, and next night we again brought her off; but it was near one in the morning before we could safely deposite her. She is pretty, very sensible, and but eighteen; has much the manners and figure of a lady. We

* Mr. Wilberforce's sister, late Mrs. Stephen.

have put her in a lodging near us. Sunday we agreed to go to church at different times, not to leave our penitent too long to her sad reflections. We are by no means sure of her going on well, and shall not be surprised if she leaves us in a moment. We are, however, looking out for a permanent situation for her. I leave town for Kent to-morrow, to stay till next Monday. They all wish me not to go, on account of this poor girl; but I have promised to stay with her on my return, if needful.

From the same to the same.

Fulham Palace, 1792

I suppose before this you are all settled down in the vale of cowslips. Our parties here have been almost every day spoiled by the business of both Houses, which commonly takes off the flower of our company. This mischievous decision of trying evidence for the abolition below stairs, is very troublesome and perplexing to both friends and foes. There is no chance, or even possibility, of getting through it this year. The Bishop of Lincoln and Mrs. Pretyman spent a little time with us, and were very agreeable. A certain great lord* has made it such a point to oppose Pitt in every thing, and obstruct all his plans, that the minister was obliged to tell the king he could not stay in unless the other went out. The king was wise enough to know which to prefer. *We* abolitionists have an additional reason for rejoicing, as an enemy is abstracted from the cabinet, who will now only give his single vote like any other hard-hearted lord.

Fulham Palace, 1792.

I have received great benefit from the air and other comforts of this place. Our party consists of Dr. Beattie and Mrs. Kennicott; the former gentle and amiable, but in a low, broken-spirited state. We have formed quite a friendship. He has taken much to me, I believe chiefly because I cordially sympathize with him on the death of his son, the *Edwin* of his "Minstrel."† He regretted to me the sad want of consolation in his

* Lord Thurlow.

† This accomplished young man translated Miss H. More's poem of "Bonner's Ghost" into Latin, at the age of 16; it is here inserted.

Macclesfield School.

Bonneri umbra Episcopum quondam sedile ejus, apud hortos Fulhamios, pervetustum, septum (*a*) undique et vestitum vepribus et dumetis indagantem, suaque manu purgantem et aperientem locum his versibus indignabunda alloquatur.

Favete linguis: hoc procul, O! procul
Absiste luco neu temerarius
Aude latebrosum recessum
Præcipiti violare gressu;

(*a*) Cicero, Tusc. Qu. L. 5, 23.

society at home, and said that it was deficient in the only subject that was soothing in his present state. I told him I thought all the Scotch, especially the divines and academical persons, were religious. He shook his head, but answer made he none. He talks of going to Bath; if so, he will go to Cowslip.

The bishop carried me one day to London to hear the king make his speech in the House of Lords. As it was quite new to me, I was very well entertained; but the thing that was most amusing was to see, among the ladies, the Princess of

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Est infulato pontifici sacer;
Has ipse sedes incolui, Deo
Olim dicatas; huc adito
Non nisi Papicolis amicus.

Indigne Præsul! quo pietas abit,
Cultusque Papæ debitus optimo?
Quò gaza vectigalis, Urbi
Perpetuò tribuenda Sanctæ?

Avis scelestis ipsâ scelestior
Ætas, profanum quæ Lutherum tulit,
Faustúmque, "posthàc editura
Progeniem vitiosiorem!"

Quisnam hunc, sacerdos, te furor impulit
Inire lucum? postea, debitum
Manes lacessenti quietos,
Supplicium luitare, Præsul.

Maria! sanctis, quæ, decus addita,
Sedes beatorum incolis arduas,
Et patrio donato cœlo,
Inter avos atavosque regnas;

Spectare ab alto si vacat æthere
Terras relictas, scilicet impio
Cultu sacerdotum videbis,
Et populi, vitiata corda.

Eheu! videbis fœdere præsules
Junctos nefasto conjugii; ah! tuos
Videbis effusos labores,
Atque pias periisse curas.

At iste, sedes qui violat pede
Meas profano, scilicet improbus
Ne forsan intentata quædam
Linqueret hic sceleris dolive;

Jam Mauricis en! vincula gentibus
Dempsisse tentat; Gambia quà fluit
Extendit hic lucem, eximitque
Membra animósque simul catenâ.

Beattie, in a letter to Sir William Forbes, printed in his life, says, "I have just borrowed Mrs. H. More's Sacred Dramas. I have had a curiosity to know her ever since Dr. Johnson told me with great solemnity, 'She was the most powerful versificatrix in the English language.'" This was severa years before they actually met.

Stolberg, Countess of Albany, wife to the Pretender, sitting just at the foot of that throne which she might once have expected to mount; and what diverted the party, when I put them in mind of it, was, that it happened to be the 10th of June, *the Pretender's birth-day*. I have the honour to be reckoned very much like her, and this opinion was confirmed yesterday when we met again.

We did a very gay thing for quiet country people. You must know Mrs. Montagu had, last week, the honour of entertaining the queen and six princesses at breakfast, in Portman-square; and yesterday she made a great breakfast for *subjects*, to which we went. Almost all the fine people were there, to the number of two or three hundred. Breakfast was ready at one;—there was a fine cold collation. The Duke of Gloucester and Mrs. Montagu sat at the head of the table, the foreign princess next. There was great profusion of ices, fruits, and all sorts of refreshments, and the gay *coup d'œil*—the sight of so many distinguished persons—was pleasant enough; but we were glad to get back to the *Monk's Walk*.

From the same to the same.

Fulham Palace, 1792.

I have only time to say that Harriet Lester (the unhappy girl whose sad story I told you of) took the advantage of my absence to elope. She wrote a most clever letter, lamenting what she called her *fate*, but she could not *yet* resolve on a life of penitence. She desired me to write to her; I did so, and, while I lamented her criminal mode of life, told her if ever it should please God to touch her heart with true penitence, to write to me, and I would still receive her.

Four years after, we find the following account of this individual.

A letter from Mary Bird informed me that poor Harriet Lester is quite in a fit of despair; her conscience so tortured that she is quite miserable, but yet declaring she fears she cannot give up her present connexion, though she expects eternal perdition will be the consequence of her voluntary wickedness. I have not read many things more eloquent or more affecting than her letters. Her present keeper, a great lawyer, has put infidel books into her hands, but she has considered all the arguments on both sides of the question in the deepest manner, and reasons surprisingly well on either side: she is very accomplished, understands music, drawing, fine works, and has a mind much cultivated. What a pity such a creature should not finally be preserved! I have still *some hope*.

In the course of this year, 1792, affairs began to wear a very

gloomy and threatening aspect in this country. French revolutionary principles seemed to be spreading wide their mischievous influence. Indefatigable pains were taken, not only to agitate and mislead, but to corrupt and poison, the minds of the populace, by every artifice that malice could suggest; and such had been the success of these efforts, and of the inflammatory publications by which they were prosecuted, that the perverted feelings and imaginations of men appeared to be propelling them fast into the same abyss into which the French had already fallen. At this crisis of consternation, letters poured in upon Hannah More, by every post, from persons of eminence, earnestly calling upon her to produce some little popular tract which might serve as a counteraction to those pernicious writings. The sound part of the community cast their eyes upon her as one who had shown an intimate knowledge of human nature, and had studied it successfully in all its varieties, from the highest to the lowest classes, and the clear and lively style of whose writings had been found so generally attractive. She declined the undertaking, being possessed with a conviction that no efforts of hers would avail to stem so mighty a torrent.

Still, however, after having publicly refused it, she felt it her duty to try her powers in secret, and, in a few hours, composed the dialogue of "Village Politics, by Will Chip." But distrusting her ability to produce any thing efficacious on such a subject, she clandestinely sent it, by a friend, to Mr. Rivington, employing him instead of her regular publisher, Mr. Cadell, to avoid suspicion. She waited not long for the event, for in three or four days every post brought her from London a present of this admirable little tract, with urgent entreaties that she would use every possible means of disseminating it, as the strongest antidote that could be administered to the prevailing poison. It flew, with a rapidity which may appear incredible to those whose memories do not reach back to the period, into every part of the kingdom. Many thousands were sent by government to Scotland and Ireland. Numerous patriotic persons printed large editions of it at their own expense; and in London only, many hundred thousands were soon circulated.

Internal evidence betrayed the secret; and when the truth came out, innumerable were the thanks and congratulations which bore cordial testimony to the merit of a performance by which the tact and intelligence of a single female had "wielded at will the fierce democratie of England," and tamed the tide of misguided opinion. Many persons of the soundest judgment went so far as to affirm that it had essentially contributed, under Providence, to prevent a revolution; so true was the touch and so masterly the delineation, which brought out, in all its relief and prominence, the ludicrous and monstrous cheat, whereby appetite, selfishness, and animal force were

attempted to be imposed upon us under the form of liberty, equality, and imprescriptible right.

We shall here introduce a few letters written to her upon the publication of "Village Politics," and will insert among them two little notes from the Bishop of London.

From the Bishop of London to Miss H. More.

Fulham, 1792.

MY DEAR MRS. CHIP,

I have this moment received your husband's Dialogue, and it is supremely excellent. I look upon Mr. Chip to be one of the finest writers of the age; this work alone will immortalize him; and, what is better still, I trust it will help to immortalize the constitution. If the sale is as rapid as the book is good, Mr. Chip will get an immense income, and completely destroy all equality at once. How Jack Anvil and Tom Hod will *bear* this I know not, but I shall rejoice at Mr. Chip's elevation, and should be extremely glad at this moment to shake him by the hand, and ask him to take a family dinner with me. He is really a very fine fellow. I have kept your secret most religiously.

Your very sincere and faithful

B. LONDON.

A few days after, the bishop sent the following note.

Fulham.

MY DEAR MADAM,

"Village Politics" is universally extolled; it has been read and greatly admired at Windsor, and its fame is spreading rapidly over all parts of the kingdom. I gave one to the attorney-general, who has recommended it to the Association at the Crown and Anchor, which will disperse it through the country. Mr. Cambridge says that Swift could not have done it better. I am perfectly of that opinion. It is a master-piece of its kind. I congratulate myself on having drawn forth a new talent in you, and on having thereby done much service to my country.

Your sincere and faithful

B. LONDON.

P.S.—Mrs. Porteus sends her love to you.

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

1792

MY DEAR MADAM,

Though I know how little you are apt to believe in the excellence of your compositions, I think you can hardly doubt that your "Village Politics" is allowed to have been the most

generally approved and universally useful of any thing that has been published on the present exigency of the times. I sent many copies to all the counties where I had any correspondence, and had the satisfaction to hear of their most happy effect; particularly in Northumberland, where the worthy parson of my parish found them so useful that he intended to get a thousand copies printed.

Speculation in politics has brought a bankruptcy on the French constitution, and speculations in trade on our bankers. The safe and true maxim in the moral and political world is *peu à peu*, as it is the law of the natural. How long I might encroach on your time, so precious to society, I cannot tell, if my eyes would allow me to act so improperly, but they will only assist me to say, I long most impatiently for your arrival in London.

My young friends in Manchester-square, and their fine babes, are all in good health. The three jolly boys and two little girls have been placed round me this morning. My best respects attend all your amiable and respectable family. With most perfect and affectionate esteem,

I am, dear madam,
Your most obliged and obedient
humble servant,
E. MONTAGU.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Miss H. More.

1792.

Oh, oh! say you so! It must have been *instinct* then that has made me send for a quarter of a hundred more of "Will Chip," and still for more and more; the last bale came in yesterday, and I see they will not last the week out; I had better have had a hundred at once. Last week I sent a packet to Badminton, and my duchess answers me thus: "We have all read, and delight in your 'Village Politics.'" A gentleman here says, he shall send for a gross of them to distribute about in his neighbourhood. I have not had a gross, to be sure, like this Gloucestershire gentleman, but I have had them past counting, little thinking—why, yes, I did think, too, of somebody, though not just the true body; for you must know the first word I ever heard of the grievances of poor Tom Hod, or the sprightly consolations of his facetious neighbour Jack Anvil, was one night at Lady Cremorne's, where the Bishop of London pulled them out of his pocket, and read the delectable dialogue to us, in tones so suitable that he was interrupted continually with our bursts of laughter (ask Mrs. Kennicott else, for she was of the audience), and when he came to "my lady," and sent her "to cold water, and hot water, and salt water, and fresh water," he could not get on at all, we laughed so immoderately. I suspected his lordship was the author.

"Well," as Tom says, I went home, and sure enough I wrote upon a bit of paper that minute "A quarter of a hundred of Will Chip; or, Village Politics, to be had at Rivington's,"—and this I gave to citizen Brown, and bid him carry it early next morning to a certain walking bookseller of mine, who procures me all the learning I deal in; and this was accordingly done, but did not hold me (as I said) three days. I have had many recruits since, and must have more. Last night a gentleman gave me "Reasons for Contentment," by Archdeacon Paley, addressed to the labouring part of the British public. I cast my eyes over it, and though I honour Archdeacon Paley, yet I assured the giver that I would send him the production of one, the minute I got home, who understood the language much better; and accordingly I despatched a little packet of Will Chip before I sat down at home. You will believe that I have not forgotten to supply Richmond. Our minister and our apothecary are supplied; and the first went to the house of Cambridge and there excited envy, Mr. Cambridge declaring he wished he had written it. Mr. Rivington still dispenses them by thousands (I hope some go to France), and though he cannot get any thing by them, nor the pleasant author, yet both will allow that this is success. Proceed we then to secrecy—but how shall I be credited when I tell you, my dear friend, that your kind and gracious confession, which I received this day, came to me without the smallest particle of seal of any sort or kind, nor wax, nor wafer, nor semblance of either; none had ever been applied to it, nor had any attempt been made to obliterate one of the precious words: dear they are unto me; so it is not my concern if the post-master, and the post-mistress, and all on the road know to whom they are indebted for this incomparable and perfect code of Village Politics. There let them rest,—they can have no better. But you are astonished, and almost tempted to exclaim, "No, surely I did not send you a letter without a seal!" Yes, indeed you did, my dear friend, and that letter expressed your hope and earnest desire that you should avoid discovery; whether you have avoided it depends on the curiosity of those into whose hands my letter has fallen.

F. B.

From the Earl of Orford to Miss H. More.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 21, 1792.

MY DEAR SAINT HANNAH,

I have frequently been going to write to you, but checked myself. You are so good and so bad, that I feared I should interrupt some act of benevolence, on one side; and on the other, that you would not answer my letter in three months. I am glad to find, as an Irishman would say, that the way to make you answer is not to speak first. But ah! I am a brute

to upbraid any moment of your silence, though I regretted it, when I hear that your kind intentions have been prevented by frequent cruel pain! and that even your rigid abstemiousness does not remove your complaints. Your heart is always aching for others, and your head for yourself. Yet the latter never hinders the activity of the former. What must your tenderness not feel now, when a whole nation of monsters is burst forth. This *second* massacre of Paris has exhibited horrors that even surpass the former. Even the queen's women were butchered in the Tuilleries, and the tigers chopped off the heads from the dead bodies, and tossed them into the flames of the palace. The tortures of the poor king and queen, from the length of their duration, surpass all example, and the brutal insolence with which they were treated on the 12th, all invention. They were dragged through the Place Vendome to see the statue of Louis XIV. in fragments, and told it was to be the king's fate; and he—the most harmless of men, was told he is a monster; and this after three years of sufferings! King, and queen and children were shut up in a room without nourishment for twelve hours. One who was a witness is come over, and says he found the queen sitting on the floor, trembling like an aspen in every limb, and her sweet boy the dauphin asleep against her knee! She has not one woman to attend her that she ever saw, but a companion of her misery, the king's sister, an heroic virgin saint, who, on the former irruption into the palace, flew to and clung to her brother, and being mistaken for the queen, and the hellish fiends wishing to murder her, and somebody aiming to undeceive them, she said, '*Ah! ne les detrompez pas.*' Was not that sentence the sublime of innocence! But why do I wound your thrilling nerves with the relation of such horrible scenes! Your *blackmanity** must allot some of its tears to these poor victims. For my part, I have an abhorrence of politics, if one can so term these tragedies, which make one harbour sentiments one naturally abhors; but can one refrain without difficulty from exclaiming, such a nation should be exterminated! They have butchered hecatombs of Swiss, even to *porters* in private houses, because they often are, and always are called, *Le Suisse*. Think on fifteen hundred persons, probably more, butchered on the 12th, in the space of eight hours. Think on premiums voted for the assassination of several princes—and do not think that such execrable proceedings have been confined to Paris; no, Avignon, Marseilles, &c. are still smoking with blood! Scarce the Alecto of the north, the legislatress and the usurper of Poland, has occasioned the spilling of larger torrents!

I am almost sorry that your letter arrived at this crisis—I cannot help venting a little of what haunts me. But it is better to thank Providence for the tranquillity and happiness we

* Alluding to the lively interest she took in the abolition of the slave-trade.

enjoy in this country, in spite of the philosophizing serpents we have in our bosom, the Paines, the Tookes, and the Wolstonecrafts. I am glad you have not read the tract of the last-mentioned writer: I would not look at it, though assured it contains neither metaphysics nor politics; but as she entered the lists in the latter, and borrowed her title from the demon's book which aimed at spreading the *wrongs* of men, she is excommunicated from the pale of my library. We have had enough of new systems, and the world a great deal too much already.

Let us descend to private life. Your friend Mrs. Boscawen, I fear, is unhappy: she has lost most suddenly her son-in-law, Admiral Leveson: I sent to inquire after her yesterday.

Mrs. Garrick I have scarcely seen this whole summer. She is a liberal Pomona to me; I will not say an Eve: for though she reaches fruit to me, she will never let me in, as if I were a boy and would rob her orchard.

As you interest yourself about a certain trumpery old person, I with infinite gratitude will add a line on him. He is very tolerably well, weak enough certainly, yet willing to be contented; he is satisfied with knowing he is at his best. Nobody grows stronger at seventy-five, nor recovers the use of limbs half lost; nor, though neither deaf nor blind, nor in the latter most material point at all impaired, nor, as far as he can find on strictly watching himself, much damaged as to common uses in his intellects,—does the gentleman expect to avoid additional decays, if his life shall be farther protracted. He has been too fortunate not to be most thankful for the past, and most submissive for what is to come, be it more or less. He forgot to say that the warmth of his heart towards those he loves and esteems has not suffered the least diminution; and consequently he is as fervently as ever Saint Hannah's most sincere friend and humble servant,

ORFORD.

Miss H. More to the Earl of Orford.

Bath, Jan. 7, 1793.

MY LORD,

I cannot but remember with pleasure and gratitude those good times when my winter evenings used to be so enlivened by your conversation, and my summer days so brightened by your letters. If this is the language of regret, I am sure it is not of complaint; for well do I know that my own want of health puts it out of my power to enjoy the one, and that my own silence, proceeding from the same cause, has prevented me from entitling myself to the other. I do not know, however, that your lordship was ever more frequently present to my mind than during the late terrible transactions. Not that your idea very readily or naturally associates itself with

images of blood and slaughter; but because I fancied I could so exactly enter into your feelings of compassion, grief, and indignation, in the progress of this most deplorable tragedy. I was fool enough till the last to entertain a secret hope that this most innocent of kings would have just got off with life; as the miscreant murderers seemed struggling to reconcile two incompatible points, the pleasure of killing him with the credit of saving him. Of the ill-fated King of Sweden I could not help exclaiming, "No action of his life became him like the leaving it:" but *all* the actions of *this* poor king seemed to have been the result of dignity, piety, and sound sense. The temper he exhibited at his death, when those assassins drowned his parting prayer with their (I had almost said infernal) music, classes him with true Christian kings; and his will, both for its piety and composition, almost swallows up the sentiment of pity in that of reverence and admiration. From liberty, equality, and the rights of man, good Lord, deliver *us!* As to these convention-men, their fantastic phraseology offends my taste almost as much as their conduct shocks my principles. It is quite refreshing to one's understanding, after reading their jargon, to find such a novelty as French good sense in the defence and will of the king, and the charge of the good Bishop of Leon. I wonder if I shall ever live to read a book again that shall cost a shilling. I have lived so long on half-penny papers, penny cautions, twopenny warnings, and three-penny sermons, that I shall never be able to stretch my capacity even to a duodecimo! I shall try, though; for I find my present studies very harassing to the nerves, and although, like dram-drinking, they invigorate for a moment, yet, like that too, they add to the depression afterward. It is so difficult to divert one's mind to any other subject, that I make no apology for dwelling so long upon these now stale horrors; for these active monsters almost banish from one's remembrance the evils of yesterday, by the accumulated mischiefs of to-day. But while they are so wicked, that when one stretches one's imagination to fix on the most atrocious crime for their next performance, it will not be found too wicked for them to perpetrate; yet, on the other hand, their wickedness has an absurdity and a folly which mocks all calculation, so that the iniquity of to-day furnishes you with no data to conjecture of what sort will be the iniquity of to-morrow.

But turn we to a peaceful and a pleasant subject,—your own health, and goings-on. I had the cordial satisfaction to hear from Mr. Bowdler that he saw your lordship looking and being in good health and spirits. Pray remember me affectionately to your fair travellers, of whose health I hope to hear a good account. I have not set my foot out of doors for nine weeks, but my cough gets better. They have been worrying me to go abroad, as if it were not better a thousand times to be sick, and even to die, in this country, than to be alive and well in

almost any other! Adieu, my dear lord, you have many wiser, wittier, and better friends, but you have not a more attached or more faithful one than Yours,

H. More.

Her pen, which had been so eminently successful in the service of her country, was not long suffered to lie idle, but was, after a very short interval, again employed in the cause of religion and humanity.

About this time appeared the famous atheistical speech of Dupont to the National Convention. Blasphemous as was this production, it did not want admirers in this country, and this ominous reception here was the motive which engaged her active pen in a vigorous endeavour to repel the mischief. She was the more strongly stimulated to execute this design from a wish to contribute towards the relief of the French emigrant clergy (for whose sufferings she felt the deepest commiseration) a larger supply than her slender purse could afford. She made her present work, therefore, conducive to a double purpose, by dedicating the whole of its profits, amounting to about 240*l.*, to the fund raised for their relief. The thanks of the committee for the management of this fund were transmitted by their chairman* in a very handsome manner. Here follow some documents upon the subject; among others, a letter from her agreeable friend Dr. Burney, whom she had long known.

At a meeting of the United Committees of Subscribers for the relief of the suffering clergy of France, refugees in the British dominions, held at Freemason's Tavern, April 5, 1793,

Resolved unanimously,

That the thanks of this Committee be presented to Mrs. Hannah More, for having given the profits of her excellent *Remarks on the Speech of M. Dupont* to the use of the French emigrant clergy, and likewise for her elegant and pathetic address to the ladies of Great Britain in their behalf, by which means she has doubly contributed to this charitable work.

By order of the Committee,

John Wilmot, *Chairman.*

Theodore John Hester, *Secretary.*

April 5, 1793.

* The late Mr. Wilmot, son of the lord-chief-justice Sir E. Wilmot.

From Miss H. More to the Earl of Orford.

Bath, April, 1793.

MY DEAR LORD,

As I begin to hope, if my health continues to improve, that I shall have the happiness of thanking you in person, early in April, for your most friendly and feeling letter, I would spare you the trouble of an answer, if I had not two or three words to say which I cannot so well defer till that time. As paper cannot blush, I will proceed without apology, though I doubt if I could have the courage any other way to expose myself. Dupont's and Manvel's atheistical speeches have stuck in my throat all the winter; and I have been waiting for our bishops and our clergy to take some notice of them, but blasphemy and atheism have been allowed to become familiar to the minds of our common people, without any attempt being made to counteract the poison. The attempt *I* have presumed to make, I need not tell your lordship, is a very weak one, and I will tell you on what occasion I have presumed to make it. I happened to know of a good many of the religious people, both in the church and among the different sects, whose fondness for French politics entirely blinds them to the horrors of French impiety. They actually deny the existence of such principles among them; to such as these, chiefly, I have addressed a trumpery pamphlet, which Cadell is printing, and which I suppose will be out in a few days. He has been very dilatory about it, and sends me one solitary sheet a week. But I have a further motive—the pressing distresses of the poor emigrant priests. I know how paltry is the little I can do, but my conscience tells me that that little ought to be done. The title is, "Remarks on the Speech of Mr. Dupont, made in the National Convention, on the Subjects of Religion and Public Education. Published for the relief of the Emigrant Priests." It is really a poor thing, and for once I can truly say, I do not write for fame, but for shillings. I have not courage to put my name, for fear I should be thought pert and political; but I do not affect to make it a secret. All here is ruin and misery. Two banks broken at Bath; at Bristol things are worse, every hour presents me with some fresh instance of somebody I know undone! Adieu, my dear lord, believe me ever most gratefully and faithfully Yours,

H. M.

Friday.

I find I have been writing you a parcel of fibs. That naughty Bishop of London *compels* me to put my name. I am sorely grieved at it; but he says, a shilling pamphlet which is sold for half a crown will not make its way without a name! Alas! is not any name better than such a one as mine?

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

Portman Square.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Your work is so much above praise, your mind so superior to vanity and the desire of fame, that I shall not repeat to you a word of the universal admiration it has excited, and the great approbation of the sentiments which prompted you to write it. I will barely assure you, of what alone interests you, that this work will afford great assistance to the poor refugees, and by the impression it has made on every one who has read it, will be of infinite service to the souls of thousands. Every mind owes you the tribute of gratitude; and that the expression of mine may not be troublesome, I will only present my warmest and most sincere thanks. With the highest esteem and most perfect respect,

I am, my dear madam,

Your most obliged, affectionate, and faithful humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

From the late John Wilmot, Esq. (then Member for Coventry) to Miss H. More.

Bedford Row.

MADAM,

The contribution you enclosed was not only considerable in itself, but may be the means, like your former ones, of adding thousands to the support of so good a cause, and above all, of disposing and preparing the minds of the public to approve of some parliamentary aid, if unfortunately it should be still requisite. What infinite pleasure, madam, it must give you, to reflect that you have contributed so largely to this religious as well as charitable work in different ways, and in each more largely than any other person of either sex I know of. I beg leave to subscribe myself, with great esteem,

Your faithful and obliged servant,

JOHN WILMOT.

From Bishop Porteus to Miss H. More.

Ashbourne, July 17.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

As you certainly belong to my diocess, and are on many accounts fairly entitled to the benefit of clergy (for you can not only read, but also write, and even preach, to the great world more eloquently than most clergy-women), I cannot do very much amiss, I think, in sending you the enclosed charge. There are two things at least you will learn from it—to sing

Psalms more melodiously in your parish church, and to reside more constantly in your proper diocess, from which (as I know by experience) you are but too apt to wander, and to be led astray into the flowery paths of Cowslip, and suchlike seducing and dangerous places; where you forget, amid the dissipations of solitude, your duty towards your neighbour, and never think of bestowing one single solitary line on Mr. Walpole, or on me. I have lately received a letter from him, in which he complains most bitterly of your pertinacious silence.

Mrs. Porteus and I left Fulham about a fortnight since, and I have been here all that time with her friends, in one of the prettiest country towns in the world, situated amid the most delightful picturesque scenery that can be imagined. We are surrounded on all sides by places famed in modern story, such as Okeover, Thorney, Dovedale, Matlock, &c. &c., which unite in the highest degree amenity with grandeur, and present to the eye every thing that is sublime and beautiful in nature. Here we shall stay till Monday, and then make excursions and visits to different parts of my former diocess, till the meeting of the new Parliament, when we return to Fulham.

I have been much amused in my post-chaise with Lord Monboddo's ninth volume on the Origin and Progress of Language, which he sent to me. It is certainly a very odd book, but there is learning and originality in it, and that will make amends for a large portion of singularity. You will not, however, easily forgive him for his very severe animadversions on your friend Dr. Johnson, who, he says, was one of the most malignant men he ever knew; and, with all his pretensions to learning, understood very little of Latin, and nothing at all of Greek. In this I certainly differ from him very widely, and not less so when he says that Livy is no historian, and Virgil no poet; that Cæsar and Horace are the only Roman authors worth reading; and that Dionysius the Halicarnassian is the first of Greek writers.

Pray let us hear soon how your cowslips and daisies and acacias go on, and how many tons of hay you have this year; for I take it for granted you are a great farmer. I will be very generous to you, and give you three weeks' respite before you write to me; but if I do not find a letter on my return to Fulham, you must expect no mercy. Mrs. Porteus is entirely yours, and so is your

Very faithful and obedient servant,

B. LONDON.

From Bishop Porteus to Miss H. More.

1793.

What can I write to you about? Any thing is better than talking of public matters, which are in so dreadful a state that

I cannot bear to speak or to think of them. We seem to be deserted by all our allies, and left to carry on alone one of the most formidable and desperate wars in which this country was ever engaged. I see nothing that should prevent the French from becoming masters of the whole Continent, while we are conquering all the islands in the world, and shall find it, I fear, a matter of some difficulty to preserve our own. Yet *here* I trust that Providence will still befriend us. We are not yet, I hope, ripe for destruction, though deserving of punishment. If ever there was a war of absolute necessity and self-defence, this was one. We took up arms to protect our government and our religion, and in *this* therefore we may humbly hope that we shall not ultimately fail. Heaven has often interfered in our favour, and rescued us from impending destruction, even within our own memory. Nothing but this interposition can now save us. Let us amend our hearts and lives, and never cease importuning the throne of grace, both in public and in private, and I will not yet despair.

With respect to Paine's book, the first impression was seized by government, and the circulation of it stopped as much as possible, but still many copies have got abroad, and, as I am just informed, have done much mischief. Your help, therefore, is as much wanted and as strongly called for as ever. I will venture to say, that the eyes of many are fixed on *you* at this important crisis. Both upon my visitation and at my return, I have been repeatedly asked, whether you would not once more, in this alarming exigence, exert your superior talents in the cause of Him who gave them. I do in my conscience think you bound to do so, and I cannot help considering this general concurrence of the wise and the good in looking up to you on this occasion as a kind of call upon you from heaven, which I am sure you will not feel yourself disposed to withstand. There is no occasion to enter into any thing controversial or doctrinal, but simply to draw out a very plain summary of the Evidences of Christianity, brought down to the level of Will Chip and Jack Anvil, exactly as you have done in Village Politics, to which Village Christianity would be a very becoming companion. This would be so excellent a match, that your good-nature alone would prompt you to promote it.

Mr. Paley's book has been universally well received, and the first edition is already gone. As he wrote and published it at my desire, I have just given him a prebend of St. Paul's as a mark of my approbation and gratitude. It has given me much pleasure to find that this book has been much read and approved at Cambridge, where I think it will do essential service; and indeed it is admirably calculated for all the higher orders of the community, as yours will be for all the lower, which I think a more difficult and more useful achievement; and you must not deny me the unspeakable satisfaction of having given birth to two publications on the subject of religion, which, with the

blessing of God, will, I firmly believe, tend to secure the principles and confirm the faith of all ranks of men, from the highest to the lowest.

Dr. Beattie's book, or rather his son's, was sent to you, by me, at his desire. I knew you would be pleased and affected, as everybody has been, with the life prefixed, written with so much simplicity, soundness, and feeling. Were not you delighted with the ingenuity of the contrivance by which Dr. Beattie first made the child acquainted with the existence of a God? Would it not be a right thing, if, in these times of extreme danger, every one were to add the prayer for the time of war both to their family and private prayers? it is an admirable prayer. Adieu, my dear friend,

B. LONDON.

From Bishop Porteus to Miss H. More.

Fulham Meadows, August 12, 1793.

I wish you joy, my dear maid of honour, of your dignity; you have chosen a most amiable and sweet-tempered princess for your mistress, and will, I doubt not, taste the truest felicity under her mild and gentle sway. Ah, sainted Mary, how properly and how judiciously have you rewarded the fine compliment paid you by this artful flatterer, who certainly must have had this prize in view when she inserted that well-merited testimony to your virtues in one of her most beautiful poems.

From the specimens you have given me of Gideon's cake, I am impatient to see the whole of that admirable composition; it brings one back to the good old times of fanatic fury, and makes one fancy one's self surrounded with the saints of Cromwell's days. I have sent to Payne for it, but I am afraid he will have some difficulty in finding it: you should have sent me the bookseller's name. I really did not think we had so much fanaticism and nonsense existing among us.

Your friend Lord Orford and myself are, I believe, the only persons in the kingdom who are worthy of the hot weather,—the only true genuine summer we have had for the last thirty years; we both agreed that it was perfectly celestial, and that it was quite scandalous to huff it away as some people did. A few days before it arrived, all the world was complaining of the dreadfully cold north-east wind; and in three days after the warmer weather came in, everybody was quarrelling with the heat, and sinking under the rays of the sun. Such is that consistent and contented thing called human nature. As to ourselves, we enjoyed with gratitude and delight this truly Italian, but short-lived, summer. We lived in Bishop's noble northern room all the day, and in the evening the meadows were our drawing-room: there our little lawn was as green as an emerald, and kept constantly cool with fresh breezes from the Thames, while every other field and garden in the kingdom was burned

up, and brought actually to the colour of a gravel-walk. Our little cottage was indeed quite delicious, and this summer alone has amply repaid me for all my trouble and expense.

Have you begun the edition of your works, which you promised me should be ready against the winter? You sometimes profess to pay a most implicit obedience to my commands; I shall be very glad to see a proof of your obedience in this instance, and to encourage you, I have set the example. I am now in the very act of obeying your commands, for my second volume is already in the press, and I have already had two proof-sheets to correct. I wish I could see, in some folks, a little portion of that virtue called by statesmen reciprocity.

It was impossible to let the East India question pass the House of Lords without something being said from our bench. I said but little, but it had the good fortune to be well received, and it drew on others to say more. Whether it will produce any effect I know not, but it was doing all that could be done.

On Thursday we hope to make good our retreat to Sundridge. Our neighbours Lord and Lady Frederick tell us it is now in high beauty. We are not insensible to its charms, as you well know, but it has a formidable rival springing up in Fulham Meadows, which we really leave with regret. Mrs. P. is entirely yours.

May Heaven long preserve you, and continue to me the comfort of receiving and reading your letters.

B. LONDON.

From Miss H. More to the Earl of Orford.

Cowslip Green, 1793.

MY DEAR LORD,

The fortunes of petty people can only be attended with petty consequences; for instance, my having been free from excruciating headaches scarcely six days in almost as many months, can be attended with no greater consequence to your lordship than that of saving you from the trouble of a few pert and prating epistles; whereas, had the same megrim taken a fancy to the turbulent brain of the autocrat Catherina, half Europe might have been the better for it, as I think it would have left her neither capacity nor inclination to disturb its quiet. But though I have neglected to entitle myself to the pleasure of a letter *from* you, I have enjoyed one of the next best things, that of hearing good accounts *of* you; your recovered health and amended looks having made a very interesting part of several letters I have lately had from your neighbourhood.

As I do not see by the newspapers (those authentic sources of intelligence) that you have separated yourselves from your sweet neighbours, I figure to my imagination that you are all going on as delightfully together as can be. I must really love you all as well as I do, not to feel a little envious of the com-

fort you have in each other's society, and in the enjoyment of some of the best of mere human pleasures, taste, literature, and friendship.

I have been much pestered to read the "Rights of Women," but am invincibly resolved not to do it. Of all jargon, I hate metaphysical jargon; besides there is something fantastic and absurd in the very title. How many ways there are of being ridiculous! I am sure I have as much liberty as I can make a good use of, now I am an old maid; and when I was a young one, I had, I dare say, more than was good for me. If I were still young, perhaps I should not make this confession; but so many women are fond of government, I suppose, because they are not fit for it. To be unstable and capricious, I really think, is but too characteristic of our sex; and there is perhaps no animal so much indebted to subordination for its good behaviour as woman. I have soberly and uniformly maintained this doctrine, ever since I have been capable of observation, and I used horridly to provoke some of my female friends, *maitresses femmes*, by it, especially such heroic spirits as poor Mrs. Walsingham. I believe they used to suspect me of art in it, as if I wanted to court the approbation of the other sex, who, it must be confessed, politically encourage this submissive temper in us; but I really maintained the opinion in sincerity and simplicity, both from what I felt at home and have seen abroad.

My hair stands on end at what I just hear of Poland and France; but in this angle of creation we do not hear of events till they are almost forgotten by you who live in the world. Two kings in one week! What a page for history! What a lecture of human instability. As to those diabolical French, I think my friends of Sierra Leone polished people and good Christians compared with them.

Adieu, my dear lord, and believe me most gratefully yours,

H. M.

From the same to the same.

Cowslip Green, Sept. 14, 1793.

MY DEAR LORD,

To any one who is truly acquainted with the sincerity of my regard for your lordship, it would appear incredible that I could suffer myself to pass the whole summer without any outward sign of that sentiment. But really, independently of much indolence, much occupation, and no small share of sickness on my own part, I believe I grow modest and humble as I grow old, and hardly feel myself entitled to break in upon your pleasant employments or your quiet leisure. It is one of my interesting pleasures to receive a letter from your lordship, while I am cut off, as I have been almost completely for the last three years, from the more lively satisfaction of your so-

ciety, which I have ever had taste enough to rank in its proper place. I need not say how high that place is.

I wish you joy of the true genuine summer we have had. The Bishop of London writes me word that only he and your lordship were worthy of it, for that you were the only persons who did not huff the warm weather away. As I value your health even more than your pleasure, it will be a real comfort to me to know that it has contributed to the former at least as much as, I am assured, it has to the latter.

My little garden is now so sweetly green that your French friends would abuse its *tristesse*. I was sorry I could not see *little* Strawberry in its beautified state. We had a sort of scheme to take a peep at it when I was at Fulham; but as we could not, at the same time, have taken a peep at you, and as we think that there are certain living creatures which warm the heart and please the eyes beyond all rural scenery, we did not go.

My heart and my imagination are saddened by the slaughter and devastation of my species, with which every newspaper is full. There are some terms which, though commonly coupled together, appear to me so incongruous that I hardly admit of their union, such as pious frauds, short war, bad peace, &c. These mad monkeys of the convention do contrive to enliven my unappeasable indignation against them with occasional provocatives to mirth. How do you like the egregious inventions of the anniversary follies of the 10th of August? Before I have dried my eyes after weeping at the picture of the queen carrying her little bundle into her narrow and squalid prison, I am compelled to "*exhibit a ghastly smile*" at the idea of a warm-bath solemnly marching in procession. I was going on, but I am too much in a rage.

I have had the honour of being presented with three very severe answers to my pamphlet against Dupont; the first accused me of opposing God's vengeance against popery, by my wickedly wishing that the French priests should not be starved, when it was God's will that they should; the second undertakes the defence of Dupont, and justifies his principles; the third declares that I am a favourer of the old popish massacres. I can truly assure your lordship, that all three have not given me one minute's uneasiness. I was only sorry that so much reproof could not possibly do me any good. Had my adversaries accused me of almost any thing but a fondness for bloodshed and popery, I think my conscience might in some degree have pleaded guilty, and I might have set about a serious reformation, the proper end of all repentance. However, all censure is profitable, for if one does not happen to deserve it for the thing in question, it makes one look into one's self; but my mind is of such a sort of make, that my chief danger lies, not in abuse, but in flattery; it is the slaver that kills, and not the bite. Yet let me not try to pass for better than I am;

these hostilities do not happen to be *my* trials; it costs me but small effort to forgive these angry men. My feelings are excited by other objects than pamphlets, paragraphs, reviews, or magazines, written against me by people I do not know, and whose opinion makes no part of my happiness. But an unkind look, a severe word, or a cool letter from one of those very few persons who make up my world, would very painfully convince me that it is not a deadness or insensibility to the opinion of others that keeps me so quiet under certain provocations; that my patience is only partial, and that if the right, or rather the wrong string be touched, I have as much discord in me as any other. Can your lordship forgive all this egotism? I have been betrayed into it by my subject, and I am afraid it is so pleasant to talk of one's self that one had almost rather talk of one's faults than not talk of one's self at all.

I have been in trouble for Mrs. Boscawen. If I had been set to look out for that person whom I thought built for the longest duration, I should have fixed on the young, healthy, stout, robust Lady Falmouth; five of the prettiest babes left! Pray, my lord, assure your sweet neighbours of my kind remembrance, and tell Miss Mary that I hope, if I live, to have many more such conversations with her as we have once or twice attempted together, and wherein she displayed so much good-nature in bearing the strong things I said to her, if I discovered but little wisdom in venturing them.

I am, my dear lord, with unfeigned regard, your lordship's ever faithful

H. More.

From Bishop Porteus to Miss H. More.

Sundridge, Nov. 11, 1793.

We are now, my dear Miss More, on the point of quitting this place, and I cannot resign all its comforts without enjoying, once more, that of writing a few lines to you, and thanking you for the trouble you so kindly took on account of poor Lady ——. I have no hope but from you, when you come to town. A serious and friendly conversation with her, in your interesting, impressive, and persuasive manner, might, I think, touch her heart, and inspire her with those devout and pious sentiments which can alone, I am convinced, compose and tranquillize her mind. As to myself, I feel I am not equal to the task, and that I have no talents for such an undertaking; come, then, and mend and console us all as soon as you can. I stand in need of your advice and assistance as much as any one. I perceive every day more and more, that I fall far short of what I ought to be. I wish earnestly to become more detached from the world, more spiritual and heavenly-minded; and yet in that busy and tumultuous scene of life in which I

am unavoidably engaged, I almost despair of ever accomplishing my wish.

The appearance of affairs on the Continent is, it must be owned, not very comfortable. The carnage has been dreadful, and the advantages almost equally balanced. But we must console ourselves with the reflection that the French declared war against us, and not we against them, and that of two tremendous evils, war or certain destruction, we chose the least; for I am perfectly convinced that if we had suffered the French to have overrun Holland and Flanders (which without our interference they must infallibly have done), all the horrors and miseries of France would in three years' time have been renewed in this country. The campaign, upon the whole, has been rather a successful one, and they who believe in a God and a Providence cannot but entertain a hope, that a nation which has openly renounced both will not in the final result be successful—will not be allowed to disseminate anarchy and atheism through the world.

I must once more implore you to get the better of that criminal indolence, and that unnatural aversion to the offspring of your own brain, which prevents you from taking proper care of them, and from setting them out handsomely in the world. If you continue inexorable, I shall try what I can do with Cadell, whom I hope to find more tender-hearted than you.

Accept Mrs. Porteus's kindest and most affectionate regards, together with those of,

Dear madam,

Your very sincere and faithful

B. LONDON.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Bath, 1793.

Health and every blessing which the new year can bring to my most dear and honoured friend, the ci-devant Lady of Rosedale, but now, I trust, of warm and cheerful Audley-street.

As soon as I came to Bath, our dear Bishop of London came to me with a dismal countenance, and told me that I should repent it on my death-bed, if I, who knew so much of the habits and sentiments of the lower order of people, did not write some little thing tending to open their eyes under their present wild impressions of liberty and equality. It must be something level to their apprehensions, or it would be of no use. In an evil hour, against my will and my judgment, on one sick day, I scribbled a little pamphlet, called "*Village Politics, by Will Chip*;" and the very next morning after I had first conceived the idea, I sent it off to Rivington, changing my bookseller in order the more surely to escape detection. It is as vulgar as heart can wish; but it is only designed for the most vulgar class of

readers. I heartily hope I shall not be discovered, as it is a sort of writing repugnant to my nature; though indeed it is rather a question of *peace* than of *politics*. I did not send one to you, my dear madam, nor to any friend, as that generally furnishes a clew to discovery, which it was my object to avoid. Rivington sends me word that "they go off very greatly, and the purchasers are people of rank." The very day the bishop came to me, Mrs. Montagu sent me a strong request on the same subject. Having relieved my conscience by owning my malefactions to you, my dear madam, I proceed to tell you that I know no more good of the author than of the book.

It is impossible to divert one's thoughts, one's talk, or one's pen long together from the horrors that have taken possession of every creature that has an atom of head or heart left. Yet I am afraid that even the bloody catastrophe of this deplorable tragedy has not filled up the measure of French iniquity. If ever one of their sixty-six monarchs deserved the appellation of *most Christian king*, surely it was the innocent Louis. When I used to weep for his calamities, little did I think I should ever have been benefited by his piety—instructed, informed, and edified by his conduct and his compositions.

It is only in the *testament* of this murdered king, and in the *charge* you had the goodness to send me of the amiable Bishop of Leon, that my understanding and my principles have been refreshed with a little ci-devant Christianity and good sense. I had the pleasure of *bestowing* pleasure by making that charge *faire le tour de ce quartier*, which is a good deal inhabited by considerable Roman Catholics, Howards, &c. &c. They met every day at mass, as soon as it was light, and hung their chapel with black.

My franking friends are so good as to send me down loads of papers, pamphlets, &c. as they come out; but I confess I have not had *nerves* enough to trust my eyes with the inspection of that horrible guillotine. I can *generalize* misery with as much comfort as another; but there is something in detail and actual representation which I cannot stand. But of all the things I have seen, none appear more seasonable, or seem likely to do more good, than Bishop Watson's sermon, and especially his appendix, which he had the goodness to send me. The *date* of the sermon, before the question was agitated, adds to its value, and both coming from such a known asserter of liberty, must open many eyes.

I enclose you a hasty sketch, excited by indignation on first reading Dupont's speech, some weeks since, which was sent me by the Bishop of London. It struck me that such poison should not be doled out to the English without some corrective. These dreadful subjects so run away with one, that I have neither room nor time to say more than that I hope you have quite lost that bad cold, and that those you most care about are well. Alas! must we go to war?

From the Earl of Orford to Miss H. More.

Strawberry Hill, 1793.

Though it would make me happy, my dear madam, if you were more corresponding, yet I must not reproach your silence nor wish it were less; for all your moments are so dedicated to goodness and to unwearied acts of benevolence, that you must steal from charity, or purloin from the repose you want, any that you bestow on me. Do not I know too, alas! how indifferent your health is? You sacrifice that to your duties: but can a friend who esteems you so highly as I do be so selfish as to desire to cost you half an hour's headache? No, never send me a line that you can employ better, or that would trespass on your ease.

Of the trash written against you I had never even heard; nor do I believe that they gave you any other disquiet than what arose from seeing that the worthiest and most *humane* intentions are poison to some *human* beings. Oh! have not the last five years brought to light such infernal malevolence, such monstrous crimes, as mankind had grown civilized enough to disbelieve when they read any thing similar in former ages—if indeed any thing similar has been recorded? But I must not enter into what I dare not fathom. Catherine Slayczar triumphs over the good honest Poles, and Louis Seize perishes on a scaffold, the best of men; while whole assemblies of fiends, calling themselves *men*, are from day to day meditating torment and torture for his heroic widow; on whom, with all their power and malice, and with every page, footman, and chambermaid of hers in their reach, and with the rack in their hands, they have not been able to fix a speck; nay, do they not now talk of the inutility of evidence? What other virtue ever sustained such an ordeal? But who can wonder, when the Almighty himself is called by one of those wretches the *soi-disant* God!

You say their outrageous folly tempts you to smile—yes, yes; at times I should have laughed, too, if I could have dragged my muscles at once from the zenith of horror to the nadir of contempt; but their abominations leave one not leisure enough to leap from indignation to mirth. I abhor war and bloodshed as much as you do; but unless the earth is purged of such monsters, peace and morality will never return. This is not a war of nation and nation; it is the cause of every thing dear and sacred to civilized men, against the unbounded licentiousness of assassins, who massacre even the generals who fight for them—not that I pity the latter; but to whom can a country be just that rewards its tools with the axe? what animal is so horrible as one that devours its own young ones?

That execrable nation overwhelms all moralizing. At any

other minute, the unexpected death of Lady Falmouth would be striking; yet I am sorry for Mrs. Boscawen. I have been ill for six weeks with the gout, and am just recovered; yet I remember it less than the atrocities of France; and I remember, if possible, with greater indignation, their traitors here at home, among whom are your antagonists. Do not apologize for talking of them and yourself. Punish them not by answering, but by supporting the good cause, and by stigmatizing the most impudent impiety that ever was avowed.

Mrs. Garrick dined here to-day, with some of the quality of Hampton and Richmond. She appears quite well, and was very cheerful; I wish you were as well recovered. Do you remember how ill I found you both last year in the Adelphi? Adieu! thou excellent champion as well as practiser of all goodness. Let the vile abuse vented against you be balm to your mind; your writings must have done great service when they have so much provoked the enemy. All who have religion or principle must revere your name. Who would not be hated by Duponts and Dantons; and if abhorrence of atheism implies popery, reckon it a compliment to be called papist. The French have gone such extravagant lengths, that to preach or practise massacres is with them the sole test of merit,—of patriotism: just in one point only, they sacrifice their blackest criminals with as much alacrity as the most innocent or the most virtuous. But I beg your pardon: I know not how to stop when I talk of these ruffians.

Yours, most cordially and most sincerely,

ORFORD.

From Miss H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Cowslip Green, Nov. 1793.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Though I do not know that it is in friendship as in natural philosophy, where the attraction increases in proportion as the squares of the distances lessen, yet I am almost tempted to think, too, that geography has something to do with one's feelings; for though I might have left you quietly alone for some weeks after receiving a letter from you from Richmond, yet a letter from Badminton or Bath sets the heart and spirits in motion, and makes one feel that, being so near, it is a sad thing not to be nearer. I felt gratified that you had even been at the door of our Bath habitation; and if it had not been for the trouble of getting out of your coach, I wish you could have seen how very pretty that situation is; the best rooms looking down directly upon Spring Gardens, which have all the appearance of belonging to the house. I have generally the mortification of finding that this month brings to Bath some dear friend or other, whom it would much rejoice me to see; while the period I pass there seldom brings more than common

acquaintance, who come in shoals from every point of the compass. My more interesting friends, unless driven by actual illness, are always lodged in their winter quarters in town before I get to mine at Bath; to which place nothing but inability to stand the cold of this situation would ever drive me, for there is something in the genius of Bath which is opposed to my spirit and feelings. I was born for the country.

I have had a third attack sent me upon my pamphlet on Dupont, accusing *me of being a favourer of the old popish massacres*. My mind is too much afflicted with the modern massacres to have leisure or disposition for one emotion of resentment against any but these. The enemies of God, of morality, of human nature—occupy one's thoughts and one's conversation almost too much; and while we exhaust upon them the indignation which their unparalleled crimes excite, we should never forget that we partake with them the same corrupt nature; and that only religion and the restraining grace of God preserve us from the same enormities. As to the poor queen, she comes out so white from the mock trial that they seem madder than ever in publishing it. A few empty bottles and an old hat seem the heaviest part of the charge; and as to the accusation respecting her poor child, it is so diabolical, that if they had studied an invention on purpose to whitewash her from every charge, they could not have done it more effectually.

It has been no small support under the great labour of the Cheap Repository, that it has met with the warm protection of so many excellent persons, and has brought me to the acquaintance of many of the wise and good in very remote parts of the kingdom, who are anxiously catching at even the feeblest attempts to stem that headlong torrent of vice, and that spirit of licentiousness and insurrection, which is threatening to undo us. They would have me to believe, but I ought not to tell you, for it savours so much of arrogance and egotism (and I should tell it hardly to any one else), that a very formidable riot among the colliers in the neighbourhood of Bath, was happily prevented by the ballad of "*The Riot.*" The plan was thoroughly settled; they were resolved to work no more, but to attack first the mills, and then the gentry. A gentleman of large fortune got into their confidence, and a few hundreds were distributed and sung with the effect, as they say, mentioned above. It is a fresh proof by what weak instruments evils are now and then prevented. You will be so kind as to thank Mrs. Theobald for the subscriptions to Mr. Haggitt; and though I ought not to revert to the cheap publications, yet I wish her to know, that the subject of the leading tract for the next month is the bad economy of the poor; and that I have been led to it by repeated applications in newspapers. I have endeavoured to show them that their distresses arise nearly as much from their own bad management as from the

hardness of the times. It is called "The Way to Plenty." You, my dear madam, will smile to see your friend figuring away in the new character of a cook, furnishing receipts for cheap dishes. It is not, indeed, a very brilliant career, but I feel that the value of a thing lies so much more in its usefulness than its splendour, that I have a notion I should derive more gratification from being able to lower the price of bread than from having written the Iliad. But let me not forget to do homage to real talents, for which I still retain something of my ancient kindness. I therefore wish it were in my power to offer ten subscriptions to Miss Burney (I always forget her French name) instead of one, for which I take the liberty to request the favour of your setting down my name; for I am too proud not to wish to stand in *your* books, as I told Mrs. Chapone, who wrote to me on this subject. I am delighted that you have generously undertaken to raise levies for this superior genius. I would not, I think, willingly be acquainted with that man or woman who, being able to afford it, could withhold their guinea from such an author, and such a patroness. Her father, too, was a great friend of mine, and is, as Johnson told me, the only learned and accomplished musician we have had since Pepusch.

I cannot obey your commands in giving a bright account of myself, being seldom without my cough for two days together. My very respectable friend who will frank this has been my guest for a week. From the hurry and bustle of public life, my little cottage, and the quiet scenery about it, is a novelty he does not dislike.

I hope all is well at Badminton, and the anxiety for Lord Charles happily at an end. Mrs. Leveson, too, I hope, is at ease respecting her son. Adieu, my dearest madam.

I am most faithfully, and very gratefully,

Your obliged

H. More.

From Miss H. More to her eldest sister.

Teston, 1793.

I was quite ill indeed while I staid in town, and am very glad to get into this sweet place and pure air. I am still poorly, not able to walk out, but go out in a carriage. I cannot say I made my London jaunt turn to any brilliant account in the way of pleasure, having never been out of the house but once. I saw Madame la Fite twice, in consequence of the enclosed, and took no small pains to draw her from her purpose; it was not much like a courtier, for I did not flatter her, but told her it was a foolish scheme: she then wished to bring it out in Holland, as the new principles prevailed much there; I combated that too, but fear without success: she is also sending *Guillaume Shipe* there.

On Tuesday I sent 100*l.* to the émigrant clergy, and next day Mr. Wilmot, chairman of the committee, made me a visit of thanks. He said he did not think the sum sent was a tithe of the money it had brought them in by means of the preface. He brought me, from the Bishop of Leon, part of a translation of my pamphlet, which he has caused two of the priests to make, and asked my opinion about publishing it. I gave them as little encouragement as I did to Madame la Fite; I think it lost labour.

Mrs. Swinburne came one day to see me, from whom I learned a great deal I wished to know of the poor French king and Marie Antoinette. She has wept so much for the death of the former, as to have almost destroyed her health. The queen, she says, was so pious when she first came to France, that it was her practice to shut herself up two days before she received the communion. In that profligate court it was no wonder if she fell into the prevailing gayeties. A great friend of the queen, on her first entrance into the world, said, "Elle aura de grands succès, elle aura de grands revers, et puis elle redeviendra pieuse." This passed into a sort of prophecy, which is supposed to be accomplished; for since her troubles, she finds her support in her religion, in which the society of Madame Elizabeth has contributed much to confirm her.

I was invited to dine in Portman-square with the chimney-sweepers on May-day, a feast I should have liked much had I been well enough. Wednesday evening —— walked in, saying he had just come from making a long speech in the House of Commons about a halfpenny, and was then going to make another on the Sierra Leone business; so he called during the pause between the two, took a dish of tea, and was off. Mary Bird came while he was there. This exertion of Pitt's for the commercial interest may perhaps save the country. Mr. Grant is to be one of the new committee, which I suppose must sit all the summer.

I suppose you hear very often from Miss Patty, quoth Sir Charles. Not one line, quoth I, to the best of my memory, since the day I left Bath.

I sadly miss poor Lady Middleton. The country is very backward, not an elm out; and though I long to see the flowers, I dare not yet go into the garden, but intend doing so to-morrow. I purpose staying here till towards the middle of the month, as I dread London. I shall not write again till I have more to say. Mrs. Bouverie sends many compliments.

To Miss H. More.

Stafford Row, 24 *Avril*, 1793.

MADEMOISELLE,

J'allois prendre la plume pour vous écrire à Bath quand j'ai appris que vous étiez à Londres. Le plaisir que j'en éprouvai fut

bien troublé lorsqu'on ajouta que votre santé n'étoit nullement affermie et vous empêchoit de sortir. J'espére cependant qu'elle ne vous empêcheroit pas de me recevoir, et si j'avois l'avantage d'y être encouragée par un mot de votre part, je me rendrois chez vous, mademoiselle, avec le plus grand empressement. Ce n'est pas pour vous exprimer combien je vous aime, et vous vénere, que j'aspire à vous voir; cela me seroit difficile, surtout à la première vue; et comme vous n'êtes pas obligée de savoir que je suis très sincère je ferai bien de ne pas vous parler de tous les sentimens que vous m'avez inspirés. Mais je voudrois vous consulter, mademoiselle, sur une entreprise, qui, j'espére, sera honorée de votre approbation. J'ai commencé à traduire votre dernière publication en faveur des emigrés, et si elle s'imprime, elle aura la même destination que la vôtre. "Je n'ai ni or, ni argent, mais ce que j'ai je le donne au nom du seigneur." Mais trouverai-je un libraire dans ce pays qui veuille se charger de la *traduction* d'un original si universellement répandu? Je n'ai fait encore aucune démarche à cet égard, et n'en ferai point jusquà ce que je sache votre opinion. L'absence des princesses me permet de disposer de mon temps durant toutes les matinées de Vendredi et Samedi prochain. Les jours suivans, je dois me rendre avant deux heures au palais de la reine.

Agréez, mademoiselle, l'assurance des sentimens les plus distingués de la part de

Votre très devouée,
M. E. De la Fite.

From Mrs. Montagu to Miss H. More.

Sandleford, Oct. 15, 1793.

I had flattered myself that before this time I should have enjoyed the pleasure of your conversation at Sandleford, but that hope not being yet fulfilled, I will take the opportunity of Mrs. Boscawen's passing from hence through Bristol, to seize on what I value next to your company,—your correspondence; and get her to convey my thanks to you for your most charming and obliging letter. I hope your next will inform me when you will come and settle in the quiet regions of Sandleford. I envied Mrs. K—— the pleasure and advantage of accompanying you in your excursions, and wished I could have gathered up the observations and reflections, wise and witty, which you would scatter on the road. Experience has taught me that more of the information and pleasure one receives from a survey of places depends on the character of one's fellow-traveller, than on that of the country one passes through. In order to give variety to the same landscape, I have known perspective glasses of different colours applied to it; but the different dispositions and different intellectual powers of the beholder, not only change the

colour, but also the forms of the objects, and group them in various orders. I speak more feelingly on this subject, having in the course of different summers at Tonbridge rambled over the same places with the late Lord Chatham, Mr. Gilbert West, Dr. Young, and our dear imaginative Vesey. If in our excursion the stately Gothic castle presented itself to our view, in the statesman's mind it occasioned reflections on the political condition of a subject in the rude age in which its proud towers and battlements were raised, and the moat which rendered it less accessible improved it as a habitation. In beholding the same edifice, Dr. Young's mind was engaged in considerations on the ruins of the stately structure; on the triumphs of time over the strongest works of man, and the brevity and vanity of all sublunary things. Mr. West, little interested on any work of human pride and ambition, bestowed his attention on the landscape around the castle. The works of nature he beheld with the enthusiastic delight of a poet, and the pious veneration of the philosopher who "looks through nature up to nature's God." Our dear Vesey, if she passed some little recess under a hedge, where gipsies had roasted the pilfered goose, or in their kettle boiled the slaughtered lamb, conceived it to be the retreat of Oberon, where he and his elfin train kept their gay and harmless revels,

> And pearly drops of dew did drink,
> In horn cups filled to the brink.

But probably you begin to be weary of my Tonbridge rambles;

> And my heart it does well-nigh despair,
> When I think of the days I have seen.

Alas! most of the best guides and pleasantest companions even of my journey through life have left me, and are gone to that country *from whose bourne no traveller returns*. Indeed, gratitude for the many undeserved blessings I still enjoy should wipe away the tear of regret, especially at this time, when my dear Mrs. M. Montagu is just recovering, after having brought forth another fine boy. The dear little fellow they left under my care knows no interruption of health or happiness, and no regret for the days that are past, or anxieties for those which are to come.

I had the pleasure of half an hour's conversation with Dr. Stonehouse, who came to the Pelican while I was making a visit there to my Lord-primate of Ireland. The doctor told me he was going into Oxfordshire to visit his grandchildren, which I much approved; for I find by experience that age wants playthings as much as infancy. I take infinite pleasure in my grandson, and though I have been alone here several weeks, I have not had one melancholy hour. I hope Dr. Ford

makes a good report of the primate's health. Pray, do you ever meet his grace and his agreeable friend Dr. Hamilton? Adieu, my dear friend: remember how much and how often you are wished for at Sandleford, and let me know when I may have the pleasure of sending my post-chaise to bring you from Marlborough. My best compliments attend all your amiable and respectable family, from

Your most affectionate
and faithful humble servant,
ELIZABETH MONTAGU.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Cowslip Green, July 10, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

I wrote to my two afflicted countesses the instant I received your letter. Lady H——, though timid and frightened at the idea of a stranger, is, I hope, by this time profiting from Mr. B——'s conversation. By return of post, I received a long letter, not from Lady Waldegrave, but from the Duchess of Gloucester, expressed in such terms of respect and kindness, that you would have thought I had been the princess, and she the Cowslip Green woman. She is pleased to say she seizes this sad occasion to begin an acquaintance which she has long desired. She thankfully accepts my offer of coming to her broken-hearted daughter, and writes with a becoming submission to the Divine will. Alas! she forms great hopes of the comfort Lady W—— will receive from *me*, and I feel so little equal to the work! I have put off my journey till near the end of this month: we have really just now so much to do with our concerns, that Patty, who was at work many weeks by herself before I came down, would be overwhelmed if I did not give her help at this time; and I thought a week or two would make little difference, as the object of my solicitude is not going to plunge into the world when her sorrow is subsided: had that been the case, I should have felt that not a moment was to be lost, but that the heart was to be hammered while it was soft and impressible. All things considered, I think it would be better that nature should have her first gush of anguish over. *Her* heart does not heal in a minute; she mourns her lord as she mourned him the first month. If any hints or books occur to you, you will strengthen my hands, for they are very weak.

We were much pleased with your account of Portsmouth, and of Captain Bedford. I wish you had opportunities to throw in a few religious hints to him. He has a fine mind. I saw, last night, a letter from his father, a good old clergyman, full of gratitude to God for giving him such a child, who has allowed him a third part of his income ever since he has been a lieutenant, and sent him, just before the great engagement,

twenty-five guineas, when he had not a shilling in the world left to provide him for a single night on shore.

Mr. B—— returns many thanks for his book: I think he is going on well, for he is dismissed from one of his curacies for being a Methodist, by an unworthy rector, who last week treated forty, the poorest wretches he could find, to a shilling play, because B—— had preached against plays the Sunday before. This rector is our chief magistrate! Do we not stand in need of a little visit from the French?

My venerable friend Sir J. Stonehouse is preaching on the verge of fourscore with the vigour of five-and-twenty!

I know not where this will find you; flown from Battersea Rise, I suppose. Mrs. Clarke's letter was unusually cheerful, thank God!

Yours, my dear sir,
Most faithfully,
H. More.

From Miss H. More to the Duchess of Gloucester.

1794.

Madam,

The very distinguished honour your royal highness has done me, by your very condescending letter, demanded much earlier acknowledgments than the delay of our uncertain post has allowed me to offer.

The respect and veneration which I entertain for your royal highness's character, and for those sentiments of piety you are not ashamed to avow, afford me a gratification in the present instance of the purest kind, and such as it is not in the power of mere rank and station to confer.

Lady Waldegrave has deeply interested my feelings, and excited my respect, ever since the affecting account I received, in an incomparable letter from Lord Orford, of her exemplary piety under a former most severe dispensation, when I remember your royal highness (as now) flew to her, like a Christian parent, to partake and, by partaking, to mitigate her sorrows. The little I lately saw of her has convinced me of the soundness of her principles; that her religion flows from an internal principle of divine grace, and was not a transient impression excited by the heavy pressure of some mere casual feeling.

From the little I saw of Lady Easton, and what I have heard of those amiable and illustrious young persons who are equally near to you, I take the liberty to congratulate your royal highness on the cheering prospect you have, in your own family, of diffusing examples of sober-mindedness in practice, and seriousness in principle, at a period of time, and a condition of life, not very remarkable for either. May the Almighty confirm your hopes, and hear your prayers for their continued

progress in purity of heart and life, surrounded as some of them are with peculiar snares and temptations.

I am obliged to defer till the end of the month my visit to Navestock. The instant my hurry of business subsides, I will trouble Lady Waldegrave with a line, naming the day I hope to be with her.

Accept, madam, of my repeated thanks for the honour you have done me, and for the opportunity it has furnished me with of assuring your royal highness with what sincerity and respect I am, madam,

Your most obedient and
most devoted humble servant,
HANNAH MORE.

From the Rev. John Newton to Miss H. More.

1794.

MY DEAR MADAM,

How many things could I say to you if I had you here! but perhaps I must wait till we meet in a better world, and see by a better light; then, perhaps, it may be a part of our pleasing employment to talk over with our friends the scenes we passed through while here. Eternity (if I may so speak) will give us time enough for this purpose. Though I rather think we shall see all intuitively, and by a glance of thought take in the whole at once.

In the mean time I often contemplate a pleasing landscape which is strongly drawn on my memory. In the background lofty Mendip extends his long arms, and I seem to stand in a certain garden not far from his foot. Many an ideal walk I take in that spot, and many an ideal converse I hold with the inhabitants of it. On a Sunday morning, my imagination trots to Shipham, or over the hills and far away to Cheddar, or some of your other haunts, and I seem to find you, without certainly knowing the road you have taken.

Sometimes I watch your path and progress as astronomers watch the motion of a comet. I lately perceived you, if I mistake not, in the hemisphere of Essex. I had heard from my brother Stillingfleet something of Lady Waldegrave, which prepared me to feel for her when I heard of her great trial. I rejoiced when Mr. Grant told me that you had visited her upon that mournful occasion. Faith can satisfy the *spirit* that the Lord does all things, and all things well; but I know by painful experience of what stuff the flesh is made. But the best thought is, that He who loves us knows our frame, and considers that we are but dust. He is all-sufficient, and faithful to strengthen us to any assignable degree that our situation requires: whether our path may be through the floods or through the flames makes no difference provided he be with us. The cases of the young men in the furnace, and of Daniel

in the den, were different; both were apparently dangerous in the extreme, but the certain safety was exactly equal in both. The health, peace, and composure I was favoured with when at Cowslip Vale, I called a halcyon season after a heavy storm; but such is the Lord's wonderful goodness to me, that my halcyon season is prolonged to this day. During almost four years, I have scarcely met with any thing (excepting this inward warfare) that deserves the name of a trial. My health and spirits are as good as ever; my family life is very comfortable, my congregation peaceful and attentive, my friends very kind, my wants are well supplied, and I can think of nothing of a temporal kind that seems worth wishing for, if a wish could procure it. But I feel enough within me to convince me that this is not my rest. Blessed be the Lord for the hope of a better! I still feel, and not much less severely than at first, that I am a widower. In this respect, I compare myself to the ladies who look through their black veils. I see every thing that I saw before, but there is something that overshadows them, and damps the glow of earthly objects. I trust this is no real disadvantage: upon the whole, I am well satisfied that all is just as it should be. I know you are very busy, and I am not quite idle. Though, as I have said, I can make shift to *feed* upon the idea of an absent friend, yet, if you could find an hour of health and leisure to favour me with a letter, I should have *a feast*. If you fully knew what a feast your letter afforded me, I think your benevolence would not let you be easy till you had indulged me. Do, my dear madam, try. The stock of my imaginary pleasures has been increased by the settlement of dear Mr. Serle in London; but it chiefly consists in knowing that he is within about three miles of me, for it is possible that our respective engagements may not permit us to meet much more frequently than if he still lived at Lichfield, and my mind could travel thither as quickly as to Buckingham Gate. With such a man I could like to pass a day every week.

I take the liberty to enclose a letter, not for the elegance of the style or the composition, but because it comes from a person whom I greatly esteem, and who, I suppose, is in much distress. Permit me to recommend her to the notice of the Misses More. During a visit she made to a relation at Olney in the year 1774, it pleased the Lord to open her heart and her eyes under my ministry; and soon after she became servant or housekeeper to Dr. Fothergill, and lived with him at Northampton, London, and Bath near twenty years, and it seems has lately been discarded for illness. I have sent her a 5*l.* bank-note, so that she is in no immediate want, nor do I wish to burden you with expense upon her account, but it may lie in your way, or in the way of your good ladies, to procure her some kind offices; and if you condescend to call on her when you are in Bath, I hope you will not repent it. Unless she is

much altered since I called on her in the year 1790 (and I am not afraid she is altered for the worse) I can venture to propose her as a striking exemplification of what the gospel can do for a sinner, even in the present state of infirmity. From my knowledge of her spirit, temper, and conduct, though she is in a low estate, I have long considered her in the rank of the first-rate Christians I am acquainted with. Such are the persons whom the Lord often puts in the post of honour—in the fore-front of the battle; exposes them to grievous pains and sickness, to poverty and neglect, that the power of his grace may be magnified in them. Like the bush which engaged the admiration of Moses, they are burning in the fire, yet are not consumed, because God is there. The sphere of Sarah Langley's knowledge in temporal things is very narrow; but she knows the Lord, and the life that she lives in the flesh is by faith in the Son of God.

Please to give my respects and love, with Miss Catlett's, to Miss More, Miss Betty, Miss Sally, and Miss Patty. Your names are all at my fingers' ends, and your persons and welfare are very near my heart. I pray the Lord to bless you in body, soul, and spirit, in all your undertakings for his sake; that he may make you as a watered garden in yourself, and as a spring whose waters fail not, for the benefit of others.

I am, my dear madam,
Your affectionate and obliged servant,
JOHN NEWTON.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Cowslip Green, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your kind, long letter. Your good account of Mrs. Clarke's health gave me great comfort; I regret sometimes that the current of life carries us such different ways, that she and I are likely to meet so seldom in this world. I rejoice that this prorogation will lengthen your country residence, quiet, and leisure; though I am a little disposed to quarrel with you, that you have not turned the past summer to some account, as I expected. I grumbled excessively to find that the work was not finished. However, I believe one cannot be too careful about any work *before* it reaches the irrevocable press, nor too indifferent *afterward*. The direct contrary practice to this is, I suppose, the reason why we see so many careless trumpery books. This prorogation, too, fills us with another faint hope which we hardly dare cherish, that of peace; and this leads me to answer the question in your letter, as to the general opinion of the people who fall in my way respecting peace. I can truly say there begins to be but one opinion, at least I am assured that at Bristol, and in this whole country, it is rating it low to say that there are

ninety out of a hundred who are growing very impatient. I do not mean violent party people, or even those who from losses in trade are particularly suffering from the war, but moderate and reasonable persons; and even those who six months ago were decidedly of another opinion. I had a letter last night from a sensible merchant at Bristol, who says, "all ranks of people (save the enemies to our government) are deeply depressed, and dread the sequel of the war, and wish for peace, with whatever evils may attend it, as the preferable alternative to hazarding by war the blessings which yet remain to us."

I anticipated in my own mind how painful your feelings would become should there be no change of measures. I hope I need not say that I shall be most religiously secret on the subject of your opinions.

The Bishop of Lincoln has just sent me his charge. It is sensible and, as far as it goes, good. But I wish bishops had not got a trick of considering Christianity like statesmen, as a good popular thing. I am, however, much pleased with the spirit of moderation and temperance in this charge. Some of the fierce champions on the government side, by way of enhancing the horrors of anarchy, represent despotism as rather a desirable thing; but why, to prove that Scylla is a destructive rock, must it be implied that Charybdis is a safe shore?

After Christmas I must trespass on you for about fifty pounds. Floods and impracticable roads without, and a severe cough within, begin to warn me of the necessity of closing the campaign. I shall push it, however, to the utmost. Who knows when I shall return to these interesting scenes? Bath is to me an exile.

Yours most truly,
H. More.

The words "*interesting scenes*" put me in mind to-day that I could not help wishing for you and your friend Henry on Sunday evening at Shipham. Two poor women came up with many tears and courtesies, and pointing to two of their children, pretty girls of ten years old, assured me that the piety of those children would not let them rest till they had taught their mothers to read the Bible; that a year ago neither of them could tell a letter, and both parents, with no more instruction, can now read a chapter very well. Just as we were going to read the sermon, in walked ten poor soldiers who were resting on their march, and who behaved with the most edifying decency. Poor fellows! it may be the last sermon they will ever hear. I wonder there is no clause in the war prayers for those who are about to hazard their lives in battle.

From the same to the same.

Cowslip Green, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

I think you would have had a melancholy pleasure had you passed yesterday with us; it was spent entirely in the new parish; the youngest child having (as is just) the largest share of the mother's care and pains. What gave a solemnity to our day was, that several of the wretched parents of our poor disciples are in the county prison, and were to be tried for their lives the next day; so we were not obliged to invent subjects to touch our audience. It was upon a woman's being condemned to be hanged that we took up this parish this time twelvemonth.

Many of the young people are, I trust, already under very serious impressions. We have the school open every evening to persons of different descriptions, and what I think would please you, several young day-labourers, when they come home now, late at night from harvest, so tired that they can hardly stand, will not go to rest their weary limbs till they have been up to school for a chapter and a prayer.

One evening in the week some better sort of people,—farmers, attend. Among a little society of these, we hope there are about twenty, including their wives, who begin earnestly to inquire, "What they must do to be saved."

The weather sadly impedes our operations, which are mostly at a distance from home, so that I seldom escape a good wetting. I could not get on without my zealous colleague. When my heart faints and fails, I am afraid I take more refuge in the shortness of life (which I labour to keep before my eyes) than in the prospect to which you so encouragingly direct my thoughts, and which cheered me a little.

If you see Mrs. Clarke soon, do say something affectionate for me. I hope she and I shall meet in a better world, for we do not seem to meet much in a bad one.

May God prosper your book, cordially prays

Yours faithfully,

H. MORE.

From Miss H. More to the Duchess of Gloucester.

Bath, 1794.

MADAM,

I beg leave to offer my most grateful thanks for the honour your royal highness has conferred on me by your patronage of my plan, and by the very condescending letter which conveys to me such agreeable information. I speak with the frankness you command, when I say that five guineas will not be unworthily subscribed by your royal highness; and as to my-

self, the money is of so little comparative value with the illustrious name and character of the subscriber, that had it been the smallest sum I should have been equally gratified.

I shall not fail to obey your royal highness's commands, to wait on you when I come to town for a short time in the spring. You will then have the goodness to be more explicit on the idea you mentioned of a Sunday concert. I would not venture a criticism on a proposition of which I do not know the full force. But I am inclined to think that no *amusement*, however modified, can be made consistent with the Christian observance of that day; for though the act itself might, to a religious mind, be made even an act of piety, yet, as your royal highness observes, many difficulties respecting performers, &c. would attend such a plan.

I hazard this remark in the full confidence I have that truth and candour are more pleasing and acceptable to your royal highness than any thing of a more accommodating or flattering complaisance.

I have the honour to be, madam,
With every sentiment of respect,
Your royal highness's most obedient
and most devoted servant,
H. More.

From Miss H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Cowslip Green, 1794.

I am too much affected, my dear sir, with your very kind attention to my spiritual wants, to be quite silent. I can truly give you the only thanks you will think worth having, namely, that I believe and hope I shall be the better for it. You have hit on the disease, and I am persuaded have pointed out the only remedy. I know, too, that your authority will give weight to your suggestions, as my mind is, from its make, peculiarly liable to be acted upon by the hints and counsels of an able and discerning friend, more than from books—more than from meditation.

I thank God I feel somewhat less of this distress, but I fear it is because my animal spirits are rather depressed, and not because my heart is more right. I trust my faith is sound, but it is not lively; I have not a full and vigorous confidence in those promises, which I, however, fully believe; and I am sure there must be something amiss in my heart which I do not know of (though I know so much of its defects), because I have little sensible joy. I do not, I think, *at all* lean on my own wretched performances; yet I have a coldness in doing, and a servile anxiety in omitting them. I have a stronger sense of sin than of pardon and acceptance, though I have the firmest belief of both on the gospel terms; but it is not an operative principle. Of my own sinful estate I do not lose sight, but

God's mercy in Christ Jesus, though my acknowledged trust, I am obliged to *seek* for,—it does not, like the other, readily *present* itself; it is not an *ever-ready activé* principle; but here I suspect my natural temper comes in: doubt and fear being my governing principles in common life. My very desire after that perfection for which I trust I am labouring proceeds too much from impatience and self-love. My right actions have but poor motives. I want the satisfactions and complacencies of a perfect state, before I have got rid of the corruptions of a depraved nature.

I had set my heart on seeing Mrs. Clarke, and am sadly disappointed. Pray for me, dear sir, that I may begin to set my heart on that one thing which will never disappoint.

I am truly your ever obliged

H. More.

From the Rev. John Newton to Miss H. More.

1794.

My dear Madam,

I suppose it is some time since you broke up your camp and retired into winter-quarters. Now you have left poor Mendip, I shall not so often traverse it till the return of summer; yet I shall not wholly forsake a spot where you have so many flocks and folds. The sheep and lambs in your pasture are worth more than all that ever nibbled the grass of Arcadia or Thessaly; and if I could be a poet but for one day, I would sing, O, how I would sing to the praise of Him who committed them to your care. I would praise the Great Shepherd, and pray for the tender shepherdesses, in right gentle lyric strains.

I was sure you would be pleased with Mr. Fuller's book: it is an extraordinary performance in itself, and more so considering that the author had not the advantage of a college, or an academy, or even of a grammar-school; when he first began to preach, he was not only *unlearned*, but quite *illiterate;* however, he knew the Saviour, and he devoted himself to his service. Having a good natural capacity, a right end in view, and a dependence on the Great Teacher, he employed his leisure hours in studying with good success. He has a clear head, a fund of knowledge, is a good preacher, and I think he may be deemed a good writer. The Socinian Goliath has not received so heavy a blow from all the learned doctors taken together (though cased in Greek and Latin armour), as from the sling and stone of this stripling.

I give you full credit, madam, that you are not an enemy to the Calvinists; I believe you are one yourself, though you are not aware of it. There are schemes of Calvinism, so called, which you disapprove of, and so do I. The talk of some reputed Calvinists is no more musical in my ear than the mewing of a cat. A sermon on Messiah, from John i. 29, in vol. 1,

contains a summary of my thoughts on these high subjects, and I am mistaken if they are different from yours. If the world so pleased, I had rather be called a Peterist or a Paulist, than a Calvinist; but reproachful as the last term is deemed by fashionable folks, I must not be ashamed of it, because I believe Calvin to have been an eminent servant of God, and his writings, especially his latter writings, are Scriptural, judicious, and accurate. As a Latin writer, I think he deserves a place among the best modern classics. This is indeed a matter of no great importance, but it is much more easy to pity or despise Calvin, than to equal or even to emulate him. However, I thought as you did of the obnoxious word in Fuller's title-page, when I first saw it; but it was already in print, and could not be altered. But even had *orthodox* been substituted, there are many things in the book itself which I fear are not much suited to the general taste of great folks, though I rank it among the most important and valuable publications of the present age. Fuller's Answer to Priestley, Mr. Serle's Christian Remembrancer, Mr. Scott's volume of Essays, are three books which I hope will, by the blessing of God, prove extensively and permanently useful. I *could* mention a fourth, but I will leave you to guess it.

I enclose you a few copies of my Fourth Anniversary. I think it is more distant from poetry than the three former, but it is *true*, too true. I hope I am resigned to the Lord's will, and satisfied that his appointments are wise and good; but I feel too much for her, and too little for Him to whom my all is due.

Could I make verses on Mendip or Cowslip Green, they must be in the elegiac strain. I have no reason to expect that I shall see them again! yet here likewise I have a pleasure in thinking I *have been* there. My chief earthly pleasures are of the social kind; few others, when they are past, are pleasing in the retrospect; but friendship founded in grace is always delightful. An interchange of hearts, and even of looks, with those who have joint communion in the objects and blessings of the gospel, is worth more than all the glittering things the whole earth can offer.

Should I live till you return to London, I shall be very glad if you can contrive your plans so as to afford me one day of your company at No. 6. I shrink from the boldness of my request. My only plea and encouragement is from a persuasion that there can be no house in the kingdom where you would be more cordially received than at mine.

Dear Betsy joins me in old love and new thanks to you and all the ladies. The Lord bless you all.

Your affectionate and obliged

JOHN NEWTON.

We find only one letter written by Mrs. Hannah More to her

family during a short absence in the year 1794, the greater part of that year having been dedicated to her schools and other schemes of benevolence.

From Mrs. H. More to her sister.

London, 1794.

Last Saturday I dined with Mrs. Montagu. It was almost two years since I had found myself in such *grande monde;* so I told them if I should be caught doing any thing vulgar, they must give me a jog. We were fourteen at dinner, and many more were added after, most of them my old and intimate friends, who seemed to receive me with great kindness. I told them to make much of me, for their opportunities of seeing such a rarity would be few. Mrs. Montagu is well, bright, and in full song, and had spread far and wide the fame of Cowslip Green, and the day she passed there. In the midst of all the splendour of lights, and grandeur, and luxury, word was brought in of the death of poor Lady E——. It was a tremendous warning; she was an amiable, generous, and charitable woman, but was immersed in luxury and splendour.

I went to Mrs. Boscawen, with whom I shall make a point to pass all the time I can spare. We have had many hours' quiet discussion. She is better, but I fear breaking up.

Three o'clock.—Called down to Mr. Henry Thornton, just arrived from Clapham, where he, Mr. Wilberforce, and Mr. Elliott have been quietly enjoying themselves several days. We have had two or three hours' prate, but our spirits were not exhausted; he is not in very stout health. Yesterday I went to hear Mr. Cecil,—Naaman the Syrian—very excellent; he has been much afflicted in his family, his children in the small-pox; and he had sat up all night with them. I afterward went to the Grants', whom I also found in trouble; they had just heard of the death of Mr. Chambers (brother to Sir Robert), to whom Mrs. Grant's sister was married; there are four young children left.

Tell Mr. R—— I have just heard a good story of his French favourites. A poor woman had planted some lucerne in her field, which it seems was not the grass quite native to the spot. She was guillotined, and no one could assign a reason for it, *que parce qu'elle avoit denaturé le terre.*

Remember me kindly to Lady Haddington. I am truly grieved at your account of her.

H. M.

The reader must have observed the rapid and unequivocal advancement of religious determination manifesting itself in the correspondence and communications of this humble scholar of the gospel about this period of her life; and will, if he feel an inspired relish for those disclosures of the work of the Spirit,

be sensibly touched by the perusal of a portion of her journal, wherein the thoughts which have relation principally to the transactions of the year 1794, were laid up in their silent custody for her future help and direction. What has seemed to belong to those more private recesses of the bosom with which no stranger should be allowed to intermeddle, I have thought it my duty reverently to suppress; but enough shall be laid before the public to give to the portrait of her mind its full expression and character.

Sunday, Jan. 19, 1794.—Heard of the death of Mr. Gibbon the historian, the calumniator of the despised Nazarene, the derider of Christianity. Awful dispensation! He too was my acquaintance. Lord, I bless thee, considering how much infidel acquaintance I have had, that my soul never came into their secret! How many souls have his writings polluted! Lord, preserve others from their contagion!

Sunday, Feb. 9.—This has been a hurrying week to me, in trying to raise money for the militia shoes; so much writing and talking, that there has been little leisure for reading—little disposition for communion with God.—When shall I gain more self-possession? when shall I be able to do business with the world, without catching the spirit of the world? Another friend dead, Richard Burke! witty, eloquent—how vain those talents without the one thing needful! I thank God that he hath shown me the vanity of genius, and given me a comparative deadness to reputation. Lord! do thou increase it, till I become quite mortified to the world. A fresh subject for praise this night—my dear friend Wilberforce carried one clause of the slave bill. Lord! hasten the time when true liberty, light, and knowledge shall be diffused over the whole earth.

March 12.—Dined with friends at Mrs. ——. What doest thou here, Elijah? Felt too much pleased at the pleasure expressed by so many accomplished friends on seeing me again. Keep me from contagion!

Sunday, 23.—Had a comfortable religious day. I see the need of doing the duty of every day in its day; by not noting down the texts, I have forgotten them. When I look back on the past week, I see cause for mourning over my vanity and folly. Escaped from hurry, vexation, gayety, and temptation, to peace, leisure, and retirement, where I had planned much progress to my own mind,—I find a languor, a drowsiness, a deadness. Sloth and self-love getting strong dominion, and much time wasted which I had devoted to improvement. Let these continual discoveries make me humble. All has been peace and quiet without, and that has induced carelessness within—the calm of prosperity is not good for the soul.

Sunday, April 18.—Passed this week in hurry—neither read nor prayed with fervour.

Sunday, May 4.—Mr. Cecil,—on "The good Shepherd who layeth down his life for the sheep;"—Oh blessed Shepherd! receive me, thy erring and straying Sheep, into thy fold!

May 6.—Came to Fulham to my dear bishop—much kindness—literary and elegant society; but the habits of polished life, even of virtuous and pious people, are too relaxing. Much serious reading, but not a serious spirit; good health, with increased relaxation of mind; thus are the blessings of God turned against himself.

Sunday, July 13.—Went to Shipham and Cheddar—very full schools at each: had much comfort in the improvement of most, and the growing piety of many. We were both enabled to speak and instruct with spirit, and seemed to make an impression. Read a sermon to the aged. Came home very late and tired, but I hope full of gratitude.

July 13.—Prayed with some comfort; but my mind was too much in other concerns. Have much business on my hands at this time; and though it is all of a charitable and religious nature (for I humbly design never to have any other), yet still the detail of it draws away my soul and thoughts from God. When shall I be purified?

Wednesday, July 23.—Gave our annual feast on Mendip to our poor children, near one thousand. Conjured by the bishop to answer Paine's atheistical book, with a solemnity which made me grieve to refuse. Lord! do thou send abler defenders of thy holy cause! Heard of the death of Mr. W——, an awful death! Profane, worldly, unawakened, in the extremest old age!

Sunday, August 10.—Talked earnestly to sweet Mrs. F——; gave her Witherspoon. Have read and conversed for many days with her and Lady W——. Lord! enable me with equal prudence and zeal to labour to impress thy great doctrines on her heart, and at the same time let me in all humility copy her resignation. Heard of the death of young Burke. Lord! bless this heavy loss to his broken-hearted father. Oh! do thou now show him the vanity of ambition, and the worthlessness of the noblest talents except as they are used to promote thy glory. Lord-chancellor Bathurst is gone, one of my oldest, kindest friends: I had very many obligations to him. How warnings multiply! this week I have not made the most of my time; vain thoughts and old besetting sins begin to resume their power. Lord! enable me to pray more, to struggle more, to live in closer communion with thee. Spoke boldly to Miss B——, made her promise to read some of the Evidences of Christianity, and the New Testament. O Lord! do thou follow with thy blessing her resolves, and show her the truth "as it is in Jesus." Open the blind eyes! Spent two mornings with Lord Orford; for him I offer the same fervent petition. Went to Sandford, Banwell school, and Church Shipham school. P—— read Walker on "If any man be in Christ he is a new

creature." Very impressive. A large and attentive audience. She laboured diligently; expounded Scripture at four schools. She greatly eclipses me. Lord! be thou her exceeding great reward. Another month has now ended; before it closed, I heard of the death of ten old friends; *all* taken—*I* left—will nothing quicken my diligence?

September.—Confined this week with four days' headache; an unprofitable time—thoughts wandering—little communion with God. I see by every fresh trial that the time of sickness is seldom the season for religious improvement. This great work should be done in health, or it will seldom be well done. Oh for better preparation for sickness and death!

Sunday, September 14.—Cheddar—a very blessed day, between three and four hundred young and old; many seriously impressed. This has revived my hopes that God will enable us to carry on this very extensive work, in spite of the heavy loss of our dear school-mistress. May we be deeply humbled under a sense of our own unworthiness for this work! May thy glory, and the good of souls, be our only end!—*we are* nothing, *have* nothing, and of ourselves can *do* nothing.

Sunday, September 21.—Staid at home on account of the weather. Read and prayed with some degree of comfort, which was invaded by the reflection that we might have been doing good at the schools. For some days have found more comfort in prayer, more warmth and spirit; but still lamentably defective—above all in *family prayer*. What is read by others makes little impression on me—not so in extemporary prayer. Yet I have a fear that it is novelty, or curiosity, that catches me. Lord, let my heart, and not my ear, be seized upon!

Mr. Hughes spent a day with us: his prayer very impressive. I suggested a plan for substituting something better for ballad singing. Prayed for the success of this scheme—Lord, bless every, the meanest attempt to spread the knowledge of thyself.

Sunday, September 28.—Nailsea church and Yatton,—had a painful, trying day. Much enmity against religious schemes—opposition, labour, and bodily fatigue! Yet what is this to what the apostles and their blessed Master endured! Lord, strengthen my faith, enable me to have patience with these ignorant opposers of thy law. Encouraged by seeing many of our young men seriously affected; unwilling on that account to throw up this one school, which I think we should have done, had our motives been merely human.

When will my heart be a fit tabernacle for the Spirit of purity? Have lately had much communion with God in the night. I grow, I hope, more disposed to convert silence and solitude into seasons of prayer. I think also I fear death less. I am much tried by the temper of others. Lord, subdue my *own*

evil tempers. Let me constantly think of him "who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself."

I endeavour to convert my retirements to holy purposes at this time. I find much pleasure and profit in a course of Henry's Exposition of St. Luke. It is now, I think, five years since I have been enabled, by the grace of God, in a good degree to give up all human studies. I have not allowed myself to read any classic or pagan author for many years—I mean by myself; these are but small sacrifices that I am called to make. Give me grace, O God, for greater if thou callest me to them! I desire to ascribe it to thy grace that I have long since had much pleasure in serious books. I now willingly read little of which religion is not the subject. I do not glory in this, but am humbled by reflecting that constant use of the means has not made me more devout, and that my thoughts at other times are not more holy.

Sunday, October 19.—Being hindered by heavy rains from visiting our schools, to our great concern, I resolve by thy grace to devote myself this day, O Lord! in an especial manner to thy service. I have seldom a Sabbath to spend on myself. Let me not trifle away this precious opportunity, but pass it in extraordinary prayer, reading, and meditation. Enable me to make conversation one of my pious exercises.

I desire to remember with particular gratitude in my devotions, that on this day five years, my colleague and myself set up our first religious institution at Cheddar. Bless the Lord, O my soul, for the seed that was that day sown! Bless the Lord for the great progress of Christianity in that region of darkness, where many have been brought to "know the truth as it is in Jesus." Do thou daily turn more hearts from darkness to light, and preserve them from falling back again. O Lord! I desire to bless thy holy name for so many means of doing good, and that when I visit the poor I am enabled to mitigate some of their miseries. I bless thee, that thou hast called me to this employment, which, in addition to many other advantages, contributes to keep my heart tender. I thank thee also, that by thus being enabled to assist the outward wants of the body, I have better means of making myself heard and attended to in speaking to them of their spiritual wants. Let me never separate temporal from spiritual charity, but act in humble imitation of my blessed Lord and his apostles, whose healing the sick was often made the instrument of bringing them to repentance; yet, while I desire to keep alive a tender compassion for worldly want, I desire also to remember that sin is a greater evil than poverty, and to be still more zealous in touching their souls than even in administering to their bodies.

Sunday, November 9.—I have lately been negligent in self-examination. I resolve by thy grace to be more diligent. My

faithful colleague has gone to our school. I wish to acknowledge her superiority to myself in many principal parts of our joint concern, particularly in familiarizing Scripture to untutored minds.

Sunday, Nov. 16.—A fatiguing day—visited five schools—many difficulties surrounded me—Lord, increase our faith!—let the discoveries of faith be more clear, the desires of faith more strong, the dependencies of faith more firm and fixed, the dedications of faith more ardent and resolute, and the delights of faith more elevating and durable.

Sunday, Nov. 23.—Detained at home by a severe cough and headache. Grieved to find that when I have this last complaint to a great degree, I have seldom any strong religious feelings. I would hope it is because its acuteness almost destroys the power of thinking, did I not feel, to my great sorrow, that my mind rambles through a thousand vain, trifling, and worldly thoughts, even sometimes in extremity of pain; but seldom sticks close to God and holy things. This seems a just punishment for my sinfulness, in suffering my thoughts to roam too much in easier and happier hours, that I am deprived of the consolation of pious reflections in those moments of keen suffering, when nothing else can support the soul under the pains of the body. Lord, enable me to keep closer to thee at other times, and then I humbly trust thou wilt not desert me by withdrawing the comforts of thy Holy Spirit at these trying times. Enable me to fix my thoughts more intensely, more frequently, on death and dying scenes.

Dec. 15.—Went to Bath. I have now entered a new scene of life. O Lord! fit me for the duties and keep me from all the temptations of it. I thank thee that the vain and unprofitable company with which this place abounds is a burden to me. Give me a holy discretion on the one hand, and zeal not to be drawn off from better practices on the other. As my conversation will be less useful, let me be careful that my thoughts are more holy, and that I look more after the state of my heart. Give me a submissive spirit to bear all the wounding words I may be obliged to hear against religion. And do thou remove those prejudices which obstruct the growth of some of my friends in divine things.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE institution of Sunday-schools, which originated with the benevolent Mr. Raikes, had enabled multitudes of the lower classes to read; and no one more rejoiced at this improvement of their condition, nor, to the extent of her power, more laboriously contributed to it, than Mrs. H. More. But she began to fear that without some extraordinary efforts their very advantages might become a source of much evil. The multiplication of corrupt tracts, which were dispersed with incredible industry, called aloud for some permanent antidote. To teach the poor to read, she now saw, was putting a dangerous engine into their hands, unless safe and salutary reading was also provided. The friends of insurrection, infidelity, and vice carried their exertions so far as to load asses with their pernicious pamphlets, and to get them dropped, not only in cottages and in high-ways, but into mines and coal-pits.

The success of "Village Politics" encouraged her to venture on a more extensive undertaking. This was to produce regularly every month three tracts, consisting of stories, ballads, and Sunday readings, written in a lively and popular manner; by these means she hoped to circulate religious knowledge as well as innocent entertainment, by way of counteraction to the poison which was continually flowing through the channel of vulgar, licentious, and seditious publications.

When she considered the multitudes whose sole reading was limited to those vicious performances, and that the temptation was obtruded upon them in the streets, or invitingly hung out upon the wall, or from the window, she thought the evil she wished to oppose was so exceedingly diffused, as to justify her employing such remedial means as were likely to become effectual, both by their simplicity and brevity. Being aware that sermons, catechisms, and other articles of preceptive piety were abundantly furnished by the excellent institutions already formed, she preferred what was novel and striking to what was merely didactic. As the school of Paine had been labouring to undermine, not only religious establishments, but good government, by the alluring vehicles of novels, stories, and songs, she thought it right to fight them with their own weapons. As she had observed that to bring dignities into contempt, and to render the clerical character odious, was a favourite object with the enemy, her constant aim was to oppose it in the way she thought most likely to produce effect. The Jacobinical writers had indeed used various arts to alienate the people from the church by

undermining their respect for its ministers. She therefore scarcely ever produced a tract in which it was not a part of her plan to introduce an exemplary parish priest.

As she proposed to undersell the trash she meant to oppose, she found that the expense would prevent the possibility of her carrying on the scheme without a subscription, and she no sooner published proposals of her plan than it was warmly taken up by the wisest and best characters in the country.

The success surpassed her most sanguine expectations. Two millions of the publications were sold in the first year—a circumstance perhaps new in the annals of printing. The exertion it required to produce, or to procure from others (for two or three friends and one of her sisters occasionally assisted her), three tracts every month, for three years, to organize the plan, and to keep up a correspondence with the various committees formed in almost every part of the kingdom, materially undermined her health; and this was not the only sacrifice she made to her country and to humanity; she devoted to these labours that time which she might have employed in writings that would have greatly increased her yearly income—an increase which her large disbursements for her schools must have rendered expedient. Perceiving that they had not only made their way into kitchens and nurseries, but even into drawing-rooms, she at length judged it expedient to have them handsomely printed in three volumes.

From Bishop Porteus to Mrs. H. More.

1794.

Your plan, my dear Mrs. More, seems admirably well calculated to do very substantial and very extreme good. I have no doubt but you will meet with many supporters and coadjutors, especially after you have tried your experiment in your own district. I am myself perfectly well aware, not only of the real existence, but of the magnitude and extent, of the evil you meant to combat; and you will perceive from the note in my charge, page 22, that your plan entirely coincides with my idea of the danger to be apprehended from the dispersion of small tracts of infidelity and immorality among us, and the necessity of counteracting them in the same way. I shall therefore probably be a large customer to your shop, and shall endeavour to establish something of the same sort in some central part of my own diocess, and perhaps, even in London itself. There is a central set of booksellers, that are to the full as mischievous as your hawkers, pedlers, and match-women, in vending the vilest penny pamphlets to the poor people, and I am told it is incredible what fortunes they raise by this sort of traffic, and what multitudes of the lowest rabble flock to their shops to purchase their execrable tracts; if therefore we gain any of these miscreants to our side, we shall have a most

respectable set of *booksellers* to dispose of our works in town and country, from the most eminent dealer in small wares in Paternoster Row, to the vender of cards and matches at Cowslip Green. It would be a most edifying spectacle to see this ragged regiment all drawn up there together, and chanting forth our admirable compositions to the astonished villagers, with their ballads and last dying words; I should also be much gratified with the sight of those invaluable original productions, both in prose and verse, which you have collected together from your friends the village hawkers and pedlers; they would form the best *sans culotte* library in Europe, and will, I dare say, some day or other be visited by travellers, as we now do the Vatican of the Museum. As to materials, you will be at no loss, you will yourself "spin a thousand such a day"—then consider what a tribe of auxiliaries you will have in the numerous and illustrious race of the *chips;* and if more should be wanted, we must try to raise recruits in the populous and learned villages of Chelsea and Fulham. But we wish to know first how many authors you mean to take into your pay, and what wages you will allow, and whether you will afford them a decent garret, and clean linen three times a week, and a hot dinner on Sundays. At all events, we hope you will treat them better than the booksellers did Milton and Johnson. *Badinage* apart—the sooner you publish your circular letter the better. Your name would certainly give it *éclat;* but, even without that, I have no doubt of its being well received.

Mrs. Kennicott is here. She and the whole domestic circle unite in the most cordial good wishes for the success of this new effort of your active and benevolent mind.

Ever yours, very sincerely,

B. LONDON.

From Mrs. H. More to the Rev. J. Newton.

Bath, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

I hope Mr. Grant has communicated to you something of the enclosed plan. I thought I had counted the cost before I began, but I find the labour very great; and here lies one of my difficulties. The religious poor, whether in the church or among Methodists or Dissenters, little need this sort of help; but it is the profligate multitude that want to be drawn off from that pernicious trash, the corruption of which is incalculable. I have therefore thought it lawful to write a few moral stories, the main circumstances of which have occurred within my own knowledge, but altered and improved as I thought would best advance my plan, carefully observing to found all goodness in religious principles. Some strict people, perhaps, will think that invention should have been entirely excluded; but, alas! I

know with whom I have to deal, and I hope I may thus allure these thoughtless creatures on to higher things. Add to this, my great and *worldly* friends are terribly afraid I shall be too methodistical (a term now applied to all vital Christianity), and will watch me so narrowly that it will require more prudence than some of my *religious* friends would think it right to employ.

Will you allow me to make extracts from your good woman's diary for a penny paper? or, perhaps, you might have the goodness at your leisure to do it yourself; or a hymn, or any thing that would suit.

Love to Miss Catlett. Having a hundred letters to write, I can only say that I am

Yours faithfully,
H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to her sister.

London, 1795.

I forgot to tell you one thing which diverted me vastly. When the proposals for the tracts were shown to the Duke of ——, he said that, though he admired the scheme exceedingly, and had a high respect for me, he should not subscribe, because he took it for granted, knowing the character of the lady, that all the doctrines would be on one side. I desired my friend to tell his grace that they certainly would. I wonder if I shall ever have time again to sit down and write a quiet orderly letter; I have always so many things to say, and never any time to say them. The Repository Tracts engage my whole thoughts. I have written a new ballad, called the "Newcastle Collier," which the Bishop of Durham is much pleased with. Newcastle is in his diocess, and he hopes to spread the plan much there. We had Lord and Lady Harcourt, and a number of such-like fine people, to-day at dinner. I am afraid we shall be ruined by the very success of our Tracts. Cadell says he would not stand in my shoes at the end of the year for five hundred pounds over and above the subscription; nay, according to another calculation, a *thousand* pounds would not do it at any rate.

My compliments to the poor emigrant priests who are so much with you; do not tell them that the French nobles and bishops now in this country are mentioned with dislike by some of our high people. My constant answer is, "You should have found out their vices before they wanted a dinner; they had no sins when they were able to give you magnificent fêtes in their own country. Our bounties are not meant to reward their virtues, but to supply their necessities." I went to London House yesterday, and found the bishop with his table full of our penny literature—above a thousand, I suppose; some of which he gives to every hawker that passes; and he kindly

says, that by letting them stand always on his library table, he cannot forget to make them the subject of conversation with all comers. I staid some hours with the bishop, till we were driven out of the drawing-room to make room for the Committee of Association for reforming, &c. The Repository subject was introduced, when it was proposed and seconded, and voted *nem. con.*, that the thanks of the Association for the Reformation of Manners should be voted to Hannah More, and a small subscription in testimony of high approbation.

From the same to the same.

London, 1795.

Mr. Mason has sent me half a dozen ballads for the Repository. I was obliged to reject three because they had too much of politics, and another because there was too much love. But two, one of which was called the "Ploughboy's Dream," will do very well. I know not what so great a man will say at having any of his offerings rejected. The bishop has written him that I am very nice and hard to please, so that he must not wonder if I do not take every thing *even* of *his*. Two highly respectable committees are formed, one in the city and the other in Westminster, members of Parliament, &c., for the regular circulation of our Repository Tracts. The Bishop of Dromore has been with me, to put me on a good plan about hawkers. The Bishop of London received the enclosed note to-day from the Archbishop of Canterbury; it would make Sally, who has such a veneration for dignitaries and cathedrals, smile to see how much the heads of the church condescend to deal in our small wares.

I found two very agreeable presents last night waiting my arrival: the works of Soame Jenyns, from the editor, my good friend Mr. Cole, and Mr. Bryant's new work, magnificently bound in morocco—a present from the learned and pious author, with a letter friendly and flattering to the last degree. I observe every year an increase of piety in this good man. Tell Patty I have got a present, too, for her memorandum book, —a piece of laurel gathered at Virgil's tomb, thirty years ago.

I have been writing a ballad for the "Cheap Repository," called "Turn the Carpet." The object of it is to vindicate the justice of God in the apparently unequal distribution of good in this world, by pointing to another. I showed it to the bishop, who laughing said, "Here you have Bishop Butler's Analogy, all for a halfpenny." I have been so ill that my friends have sent Dr. Warren to me. He is a most agreeable, as well as able, man; pays me every attention, but will never take a fee. This is uniformly the case, whatever physician I consult, and I have consulted all that are eminent. I have surely reason to speak highly of the liberality of the profession.

H. More.

We find among her loose papers an extract from a letter from the late Lady Waldegrave to a friend, on the subject of the tracts, without date, which seems proper for this place.

"I received a letter by the last ships from India, from Mrs. Torriano. She was then at Chittoon, about one hundred and thirty miles west of Madras. She mentions having seen at Madras a missionary of the name of Gericke, who visited her very frequently, and in whose society she found great comfort. He told her that the Rajah of Tanjore had been for a short time under his care, and that he was fond of English books. Mr. Gericke put into his hands Mrs. H. More's tracts. The rajah preferred them to the Rambler, which somebody had given him, and declared he liked Mrs. More's works better than any of the English books he had ever read. Mr. Gericke wishes that Mrs. More should be made acquainted with this, that she may know how extensively useful her writings are. He told Mrs. Torriano there were few things he desired so much as to see and converse with Mrs. H. More and Mr. Wilberforce; that from the "Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable World" he had often taken sermons, but did not know, till she told him, who was the author of it."

From Mrs. H. More to her sister.

London, 1795.

I paid my visit to Gloucester House yesterday. Lady Waldegrave presented me to the duchess. We had two hours of solid, rational, religious conversation. It would be too little to say that the duchess's behaviour is gracious in the extreme. She behaved to me with the affectionate familiarity of an equal; and though I took the opportunity of saying stronger things of a religious kind than perhaps she had ever heard, she bore it better than any great person I ever conversed with, and seemed not offended at the strictness of the gospel. I was resolved to preserve the simplicity of my own character, and conversed with the greatest ease. It was Thursday, the great court-day on the royal marriage. The duchess presented me to Princess Sophia and Prince William.

The manners of these two young personages were very agreeable. They found many kind things to say to me, and conversed with the greatest sweetness and familiarity. I strongly recommended Mr. Gisborne's book. The duchess quoted the "Shepherd of Salisbury Plain" two or three times, and told me of a little adventure she had had. She desired Lady Mary Mordaunt (one of her ladies of the bed-chamber) to stop an orange-woman, and ask her if she ever sold ballads. "No, indeed," said the woman, "I don't do any thing so mean, I don't even sell *apples*!" This diverted them, as they did not know there were so many ranks and gradations in life. With

some difficulty, however, they prevailed on her to condescend to sell some of our little books, and in a few hours she came back, showing them two shillings she had cleared by her new trade.

Lord Orford rallied me yesterday, for what he called the ill-natured strictness of my tracts; and talked foolishly enough of the cruelty of making the poor spend so much time in reading books, and depriving them of their pleasure on Sundays. In return, I recommended him and the ladies present to read "Law's Serious Call." I told them it was a book that their favourite Mr. Gibbon had highly praised; and, moreover, that Law had been Gibbon's tutor early in life. Both are true, but was there ever such a contrast between preceptor and pupil? They have, however, promised to read it; and I know they will be less afraid of Gibbon's recommendation than of mine.

Poor Lord Orford has been very seriously ill, and is far from recovered. I was told that, as he lay on his bed, he cried out, "I wish I had not scolded poor Hannah More for being so religious! I hope she forgives me." So I sent him word that I forgave him, and would pray for him.

My kind friend Mrs. Garrick is very angry that I so much curtail my visits to her, but I feel that I have no right to steal time from occupations by which I hope I may be made an instrument of some little usefulness.

From the same to the same.

Fulham Palace, 1795.

Coulthurst tells me it was a famous speech that Mr. Wilberforce made at York about the Sedition Bills, which has established his own popularity and the cause of government in that county. Mrs. Kennicott is here, and Mr. Jacob Bryant is expected. We dined yesterday at Chelsea, at Lord Cremorne's. To-day we visit Mr. Ormerod at his new residence at Kensington.

Since writing the above, Lady Euston has been here to spend the morning. She tells me that her lord and Pitt were returned yesterday for Cambridge. I reckon that Sally is quite wild at the budget. Such national wealth! such a minister! 600 000*l.* in the treasury; and then he thanks *Divine Providence*, too, for the flourishing state of the nation! I hope this view of the nation's dependence will open more and more upon him.

No one can duly appreciate the worth and agreeableness of the delightful owners of this house, who have not, like me, had the privilege of being an inmate for some weeks every year. Mrs. Porteus always puts me in mind of an expression of Sir Philip Sidney; her whole demeanour and conduct is the "measure of propriety." I never knew a woman more discreet and judicious, or who more properly selected topics for conversation. As to the bishop, his life is a tissue of good

actions. His industry is incredible; he still rises at five, and the end of one useful employment is only the beginning of another. His mind is always alive when any project of public good or private benevolence is on foot. His sweetness of temper, his playful wit, his innocent cheerfulness, embellish and delight our little society. My visits here are rendered perfectly agreeable, now that I am so little in town, by their kindness in inviting my particular friends to meet me here.

Lord Orford has presented me with Bishop Wilson's edition of the Bible, in three vols. quarto, superbly bound in morocco (oh! that he would himself study this blessed book), to which, in a most flattering inscription (a copy of which I enclose), he attributes my having done far more good than is true. Alas! when I receive these undue compliments, I am ready to answer, with my old friend Johnson, "Sir, I am a miserable sinner."

To his excellent friend
MISS HANNAH MORE,
this Book,
which he knows to be the dearest object of her study,
and by which,
to the great comfort and relief
of numberless afflicted and distressed individuals,
she has profited beyond any person with whom he is acquainted,
is offered
as a mark of his esteem and gratitude,
by her sincere
and obliged humble servant,
HORACE, EARL OF ORFORD,
1795.

A little previous to this time, Mrs. Hannah More received from her sister Martha, who was vigorously engaged in the instruction and superintendence of their schools, an account of the funeral of one of the school-mistresses whom they had for some years employed. It affords at once such a proof of providential direction in the choice of the teachers they engaged, and of the respect which sincere piety and useful talents may procure to those who are in very humble life, that I think its intrinsic worth will vindicate its insertion. It deserves a place, too, as a specimen of the fervent spirit and simple piety of the warm-hearted writer; a woman whose frame was the weak and languid vehicle of a strong and warm heart directing its affections first to her God and Saviour, and then expanding them over the whole human race in labours of love.

From Martha to Hannah More.

Monday, August 18, 1795.

I took my letter yesterday to finish it at Cheddar; but, alas! hurry, grief, and agitation rendered it almost impossible for me to write a word; however, I will endeavour to convey to you

that we have just deposited the remains of our excellent Mrs. Baber to mingle with her kindred dust. Who else has ever been so attended, so followed to the grave? Of the hundreds who attended, all had some token of mourning in their dress. All the black gowns in the village were exhibited, and those who had none had *some* broad, *some* little bits of narrow black riband, such as their few spare pence could provide. The house, the garden, and place before the door were full. But how shall I describe it?—not one single voice or step was heard——their very silence was dreadful; but it was not the least affecting part to see their poor little ragged pocket-handkerchiefs, not half sufficient to dry their tears—some had none, and those tears that did not fall to the ground they wiped off with some part of their dress. When the procession moved off, Mr. Boak, who was so good as to come to the very house, preceded the corpse, with his hat-band and gown on, which, as being unusual, added somewhat to the scene; then the *body;* then her sister and myself, as chief mourners; a presumptuous title amid such a weeping multitude—then the gentry two and two—next, her children, near two hundred—then all the parish in the same order—and though the stones were rugged, you did not hear one single footstep.

When we came to the outer gate of the churchyard, where all the people used to wait to pay their duty to her by bows and courtesies, we were obliged to halt, for Mr. Boak to go in and get his surplice on, to receive the corpse with the usual texts. This was almost too much for every creature, and Mr. Boak's voice was nearly lost; when he came to "I know that my Redeemer liveth," he could scarcely *utter* it; but to *feel* it was a better thing. On our entrance into the church, the little remaining sight we had left discovered to us that it was almost full. How we were to be disposed of I could not tell. I took my old seat with the children, and close by her place. Mr. Boak gave us a discourse of thirty-five minutes *entirely* upon the subject. His text was from St. John, "Where I am, there shall also my servant be." He said he chose it because it was the last she had made use of to him (I was sitting on her bed at the same time),—he added, she looked round her and observed it was comfortable to have kind friends, but much better to have God with one. His sermon was affecting and bold: as a proof of the latter, though Mr. —— the vicar was there, and he himself was curate, he said with an emphasis in his voice, and a firmness in his look, "This eminent Christian first taught *salvation* in Cheddar." He spoke of Betsy in high terms, besought all to look to her, and very sweetly put up a prayer, that a double portion of the mother's spirit might descend upon the daughter. He was very tender in his address to the children, exceedingly solemn in that to the young men and women, and concluded with a fervent and suitable prayer.

When we drew near to the grave, and the last solemn rite was performed, and "ashes to ashes, dust to dust" was pronounced, everybody threw in their nosegays. I was almost choked. When Robert Reeves, John Marshal, and the six favourites let down the coffin, they stood over it in an attitude never to be described, and exhibited a grief never to be forgotten. They feared at one time Mr. Gilling must have been taken out of the church. If you could for a moment doubt my account, I would add, that the undertaker from Bristol wept like a child, and confessed, that without emolument, it was worth going a hundred miles to see such a sight. I forgot to mention, the children sobbed a suitable hymn over the grave. Here was no boisterous hysterical grief, for the departed had taught them how to select suitable texts for such occasions, and when to apply the promises of Scripture. I think almost tears enough were shed to lay the dust. We returned as we went, saving that we had left this "mother in Israel" behind. When we got the children into the great room, and missed her lively sprightly figure and movements, every heart sunk.

I said a great deal to them all as well as I could, and wrung their little hearts; for I knew but too well that the world and young blood would make an excellent sponge to wipe out, full soon, the awful business of that day. My rough nature generally directs me rather to *probe* than *heal* a wound: the natural man loves to patch, but the new piece will tear the old garment. Mr. Boak was very kind, and assisted me a good deal in talking to them; and said all now hung upon their own good conduct whether the school should be continued or not, but he hoped we should try it at least a twelvemonth. Excellent laborious Betsy has hitherto all her life been an indefatigable slave. She will now suddenly be called into great power, and Satan, I presume, will be more active about her than ever; therefore the truest tenderness will be, to keep a tight rein ourselves, and let her out gradually, as we have not that exalted opinion of the dignity of human nature which some gentlemen and ladies have. I have promised to go next Sunday to open the school, and talk to the people, if I am able. I think I shall go on horseback. Mrs. Baber seemed for the last six months to have been particularly preparing for death. She had been very bilious, and slept but little. Betsy would speak, and inquire how she did? her answer was, I lie awake, and in pain, but eternity is revealed to me in a manner I cannot, dare not tell. She had ceased speaking to the people after the sermon for some time, and made Betsy do all the *important* parts of the business; the *laborious* part she always did.

I should have thought it no crime to have given a considerable sum to have had you, Mr. W——, and Mr. T—— present. Perhaps such a sight has seldom been exhibited. Oh, that the

rich and great would so live as to be so mourned! So passeth this world away, and so we go on sinning, and take no warning. Never, never had I such difficulty to restrain my tongue as at the moment the last office was performed: the people! the children! the solemnity of the whole! the spirit within seemed struggling to speak, and I was in a sort of agony, but I recollected that I had heard somewhere a woman must not speak in the church. Oh! had she been interred in the churchyard, a messenger from Mr. Pitt should not have restrained me, for I seemed to have received a message from a higher master within; and I have long been convinced that Satan is as often dressed in the garb of prudence as in any other, and as often succeeds in it. How many pious people prayed for her; Mr. Serle too! yet all did not prevail. She seemed indeed to have done her work. I am sure, Mr. N—— especially will lament her, because he had seen her so often. How this Cheddar work will now go on no human being can tell; but of this we are certain, it is in the same *hands* now that it was before.

MARTHA MORE.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

I need not bespeak your sympathy—poor Mrs. Baber has finished her course. She has fought the good fight,—she is gone to possess her crown of glory. The greatness of this loss quite subdues my mind, and I cannot get it into a good frame; being, besides, quite stupified with two days' intense headache—but I must answer your letter. I think you may properly enough make a *small* present in money, to the young women only; as to the *weighty* considerations of your rations of beef and mutton, I will write your *pièce justificatif* to Mrs. Bouverie, as soon as my hand is a little stronger. Though there are few things I am more anxious about than the completion of your important work, yet I do not advise you to write when you feel utterly indisposed to it. Somebody says, the reason why we feel tired at some parts of a book is "because the author writes when he should have rested." Lord T—— gave a grand ball to the camp just by us (this a time for balls!) —and on Tuesday or Wednesday he heard his son was dead of the yellow fever in the West Indies. This poor nobleman had been continually in my mind all the week before I heard this, considering how he could be got at, as your friend H. T—— will tell you. Surely now would be a proper time. Our peaceful *tête-à-têtes* have been interrupted since yesterday by another marquis, a man of war, Lord Cornwallis. A gentle sort of character he seems. Last night I was earnest with him on the politics of France and Flanders, but to-day Cheddar has

driven Robespierre out of my head—"Why art thou cast down, O my soul! hope thou in God." If Lord Cornwallis knows that it was only the death of the poor mistress of a charity school which prevents my going down to take leave of him, how cheap must he hold me! but how little in my estimation are the most brilliant heroes to this dear woman, who has turned many, I had almost said who has turned hundreds, to righteousness!

Yours, most truly,

H. More

Poor Lord Bathurst! he was one of my earliest friends.

From the same to the same.

London, 1796.

I am reading the Life of Gibbon; it will disappoint two sorts of readers, for it is neither very wicked nor very entertaining, but rather dull, and on the whole rather harmless; nay, even instructive, as it shows the discomfort of his principles. I have paid my devoirs at Gloucester House, and was very cordially received; I have also been with Lady Euston, Lady Waldegrave, &c. We had more company in the afternoon than usual, among others Mr. Morris, the American ambassador to France; but he disliked the French, and they him; so, like a wise man, he came hither rather than remain with those virtuous republicans. I was introduced, and had much conversation with him. He is a fine figure of a man, though one of his legs has been eaten up by a tiger. I also picked up a good *repository* friend, Archdeacon P—— of Shrewsbury, to whom I gave large instructions. The Duchess of Gloucester told me Captain Bedford's story about the poor sailor, who refused two guineas for saving a man's life, because the *little books* told him he must not be paid for doing good, but must do it for the love of God. Mrs. Carter I find healthier and younger than usual. I took an opportunity of talking much to Bishop Watson on the subject of his book (in answer to Tom Paine) when I lately passed an evening with him. I could tell him with great truth that I much admired it; but I told him also, that a shilling poison like Paine's should not have had a four shilling antidote. He agreed to it, but said, What could a poor bishop with eleven children do? Besides, had it been cheaply printed, it would not have been so likely to be read by the great. I agreed with him that it was more calculated for the readers of Voltaire than those of Paine; yet he said he was pleased that two butchers had been to his booksellers, and bought one each, and the next day one of them came and bought another. He told me that two impressions, one of a thousand, and another of fifteen hundred, had been sold. I asked him how he could in conscience treat Paine with respect, or like a sincere or honest man, and fairly told him I thought it wrong; but I suppose he did not care to

offend Paine's party in politics. Another bishop (Percy) attacked me on the new spurious Shakspeare. I told him I had left off poetry, and had no curiosity about this great literary fraud. My want of taste shocked him. Mrs. H—— and I went the other day and breakfasted with Mrs. Bouverie, and the old lady and the young one have struck up a friendship. I knew they would be pleased with each other, as I think there is some resemblance in their characters. Mrs. Garrick sends her love.

Mrs. Boscawen to Mrs. H. More.

1795.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Following your example when I can, I will begin my letter with Plutarch, and say, that if he had come after you he would certainly have written your life: not that I remember any females in his list, but I remember Lycurgus and Solon; and I am sure as a lawgiver he would have preferred you, had he been at all acquainted with the county of Somerset, or the diocess of Bath and Wells, where, in your new institutions, you give such laws as benefit your happy young proselytes beyond the duration of their present existence. I shall conclude, then, this mention of Plutarch with his oracle, "*Sieds toi au milieu de la poupe du vaisseau, et prends en main le gouvernail*," and may God grant you health for his service.

I have so often intended to thank you over and over for the charming *rouleau* of cheap repository poetry which you bestowed upon me, that at length I have almost persuaded myself I have done it. However, as franking is about to cease, I may as well make use of the interval which remains to send you my gratitude and my admiration gratis. Indeed, nothing can equal your poetry but your prose, nor the "carpenter" but the "shoemaker." All have marched to Richmond, and Miss Sayer disposes of them in rewards to our Sunday scholars: and as I sent her also the prospectus, I think it will attract some subscribers among our ladies there. There is a Mr. and Mrs. D——, who live on the hill, magnificent people, who entertain the Duke of C——, and give balls during every week in autumn (*chose peu necessaire*); but they did also give to our subscription for the poor no less than one hundred pounds, which I was particularly pleased with, as their munificence to the rich in splendid dinners is so unbounded. This great gift has caused our poor to suffer less than they used to do even in the mildest winters; and the other subscribers paid their quota in pains and care to dispose of it well, and by degrees; so that it will be lasting. It would be well if the "manners of the great" were in all respects as conformable to your instructions as they are in the article of almsgiving.

I do not wonder that Lord Cornwallis is your favourite hero,

"For, trust me, fame is fond of Massinissa—wise, valiant, good; with every praise, with every laurel crowned." (You know I am bound to quote Thomson.) I am very glad you had the pleasure of seeing and conversing with him so much at Lady Waldegrave's; I could almost have envied you; but I do not, for *you are worthy*.

Our dear Lady Charlotte Wentworth has given to Ladies Murray and me two dinner visits; but she will not come and reside with us while her nieces, Ladies Fitzwilliam, are in town. Mr. Cambridge still *walks* to see me. Mrs. Montagu is well at Sandleford, surrounded by her charming family. Lord and Lady Cremorne are going to Tunbridge next week. Thus you have many private histories, dear madam, but as to the public, all I can say is, remember it in your prayers; and oh! may the prayers of a whole people, poured forth in unison to-morrow, avail, that mercy may succeed to judgment. I would that all were as earnest as yours will be! I hope your sisters are all well; God bless you together, my dear friend, and prosper all your good works.

Yours, very affectionately,

F. B.

I am glad you have visited your ancient diocesan, for I am sure it gave him pleasure to receive you as his most excellent suffragan; but, my dear friend, must you not now quit your diocess, and your pious cares, and repair to your quarters at Bath!

Mrs. H. More to a Friend.

Cowslip Green, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

I will answer your question, "whether I think it is or is not your duty to indulge the gayety of your temper among strangers!" with the plainest sincerity and truth, according to my judgment. I have no doubt that it is a part of Christianity to convert every natural talent to a religious use, and therefore I declare I think you are serving God by making yourself agreeable, upon your own views and principles (for the motive is the act), to worldly but well-disposed people, who would never be attracted to religion by grave and severe divines, even if such ever fall in their way. Those who can adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour by cheerful manners, defeat the end of the Giver by assuming a contrary character. It is an honest bait, by which they will at last be attracted to like you for some better part of you. I do not mean that their liking *you* much signifies, except in so far as, through your medium, they may be brought to relish religion. How many have been induced to read Cowper's "Task" by "John Gilpin," "Pascal's Thoughts" by his "Provincial Letters," and Dodd-

ridge's Works by his Letters. By-the-by, Doddridge is a case in point—I have heard Sir James Stonehouse say he never knew a man of so gay a temper as Doddridge. One great use that may follow your carrying this cheerfulness into worldly company is this—if they have sense and reflection, they will discern what sacrifices you must make, and what conquests religion enables you to achieve over yourself, when they hear that gayety does not seduce you from the rigour of your principles and the severity of your morality. They will find out that you are not driven to religion because you have no taste for that wit and elegance which they rate so highly; and that your nonconformity to the world does not spring from your having no taste for its enjoyments, but because you know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Dead and buried as they are in luxury and indulgence, it is only by such casual discoveries as these that they can ever get the smallest glimpse of the meaning of "plucking out right eyes, and cutting off right hands." To such people, religion must be made, as it were, tangible, palpable, visible; else they are apt to think it but an idle speculation.

On the other hand, I have told Lady S. that there is this danger attending the society of religious people who are gay and pleasant—that it is apt to indispose worldly minds towards other religious persons who may be equally good, though they have a severer cast of temper; and I have desired her not to suspect the next religious man she meets of being either a drone or a hypocrite, because he may be either constitutionally grave, or may think it right to assume an exterior of greater strictness.

Since writing the above, I have just got a letter from my old friend Lady S. on other business. You are named in it. I have a great mind to send you that part, as it will show you that your conduct made no wrong impression. Little as she says, however, I am half afraid of sending it, as I am in disgrace with your sage friend H. from a parallel conduct, when I thought, as now, I was doing a mighty wise thing. If I am wrong, tell me so, for I am wrong upon system. I have not myself any vain curiosity to know what people at large think of me; but if there is any one over whom their good opinion may give me useful influence, I think it of importance. I intend this letter to convince you of my sincere friendship, if not of my wisdom. Of all compliments, I abhor religious compliments; and in writing to you on this subject, I have tried to speak as if it were of another person, and not of yourself. And now in return what shall *I* do? These people come to me; that I cannot help—but I do not go to them. My neighbour, the Duchess of ——, is not well, and wants me; but I can do her no good. Here I do but *little*, but a little is something. I think I have done with the aristocracy. I am

no longer a debtor to the Greeks, but I am so to my poor barbarians.

God bless you, my dear sir, prays

Your obliged and affectionate

HANNAH MORE.

From Bishop Porteus to Mrs. H. More.

London, 1795.

I have now to thank you, my dear Mrs. More, for your letter of the 16th, for your printed papers, and the specimens of your village poetry, which is admirable. Your list of other intended publications is very tempting, and if they are all executed with the same elegance and felicity, and the same happy intermixture of little moral inuendoes, as the "Market-woman," your poetic sermons will do more good to your simple cottagers than all our dull prosaic compositions put together. Pray send me a few more copies of your "Market-woman," and any thing else you may have ready, that I may send some with the proposals to my country friends; for the nature of these compositions will be a better recommendation of the plan than any thing you or I can say in favour of it. I shall hope to see you, like Thespis, mounted on your cart, and singing your own ballads through all the villages in Somersetshire. By-the-way, there is one thing more wanting to complete your plan. You must take a music-master into your pay, to set your ballads to easy, popular, vulgar tunes, adopting, in preference to all others, the old favourite ones of "Chevy Chase," "The Children in the Wood," &c.

You may rest assured, that both the Bishop of Durham and myself (and I hope many others of our brethren) will be in the number of your subscribers. And though the times are bad for raising new levies of money at present, yet if we can but keep the French out of England, and all things quiet at home, I hope there will be still both money and piety enough left in the country to keep you out of the King's Bench. It would, to be sure, be very pleasant to have you for so near a neighbour; but as they would only let you out on Sundays to St. James's-square, and not at all, I fear, to Fulham, I do not much relish the idea of your withdrawing yourself from the world to that reputable and elegant retreat.

Mr. Cadell I have already seen, and can testify to his zeal in the cause. I held a conference with him on this magnificent and ambitious project of yours. You pretended at your onset that you were extremely humble and modest, and should try your wild experiment first within the precincts of your own neighbourhood. But behold, like a true female adventurer, you dash at once without fear into the wide world, and will be content with nothing but a complete conquest over all the vulgar

vices in Great Britain. I most devoutly wish success to your spiritual quixotism.

But to descend from these sublimities, be assured of the esteem, regard, and affection with which

I am most devoutly yours,

B. LONDON.

From Bishop Porteus to Mrs. H. More.

Sundridge, Oct. 9, 1795.

I take a little bit of paper, my dear Mrs. More, because I have only a little bit of time to spare, just enough to say, how do you do? which I say with much meaning and more anxiety, because the last accounts I heard from you were not such as I liked. Pray make us easy, if you can, on this subject.

We have been, as you probably know, great ramblers. We have been to the ends of the world, and seen everybody and every thing upon the face of the globe. Nothing could be more fortunate than we were in the weather, and every other requisite to comfort and delight. Yet we did not travel eight hundred miles for mere amusement. I should have been ashamed of such a frolic, and such an expense, at my time of life; but many important and beneficial purposes were answered by it, besides that of seeing (probably for the last time) many old friends whom I had not seen for half a century; and of visiting once more the places of my birth and my education; and reviving (with some sensations of delight) the recollection of scenes in which I had passed some of the earliest and happiest days of my life.

But wherever I went, I heard of you and your *good works*. Some of them I saw in a shop-window at York, and stopped to talk with the mistress of it, a fine, fat, round-faced, well-looking Quaker, who said she sold a great number of them, and gave many away to the poor people, who were very fond of them. She envied me much when I told her I was a *little* acquainted with you; and said she had not the happiness of knowing thee, but was sure thou must be a very good sort of woman. I told her I was rather inclined to be of that opinion myself, and so we parted very good friends.

After an absence of two months, notwithstanding all the recreations of our journey, we were glad to enter once more the gates of our old convent at Fulham, where we spent the finest September that was ever known, I believe, in this country, in a very quiet way, with a pleasing little domestic circle, consisting of our own constant family party, with the addition of Mrs. Kennicott for one week, and of a young man who has just taken his degree at Cambridge with great credit, and has been unanimously chosen fellow of his college at a very early time of life.

We came here about three weeks ago, to spend the short,

very short interval, alas! before the meeting of Parliament on the 29th of this month, whither we must go up to encounter altercations, angry words, and melancholy truths, which one can only grieve over, without the power, I fear, to remedy. We are in a tempest, in which it seems to be quite impossible for human power or human wisdom to guide the helm: it is in the hands of a superior Power, which must turn us whithersoever it will, and whether it will be to safety or destruction, God only can tell! I shut my eyes as much as I can to the future, and am thankful for every comfort I am permitted to enjoy for the present.

I am just sending out two heroic missionaries, one to Jamaica, the other to Barbadoes; and I have loaded both with a large packet of your great volumes. Your fame, therefore, will soon fly over the western world.

With our united best regards,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

B. LONDON.

From Mrs. H. More to Zachary Macaulay, Esq.

Bath, Jan. 6, 1796.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

We seem to be relapsing into our old habits of silence,—in dolent habits, I was going to say, but it would not be quite true, for I have really been so hard-worked, that I have but little enjoyment of the dear delicious pleasures of laziness, for which I think privation only serves to increase my desire. What has hurried me so much lately has been the taking up of a quite new parish, so surprisingly wicked and inconceivably ignorant that I feel when there as if I were queen of Botany Bay: however, as I have got near two hundred in training in this place, and as they receive instruction with more alacrity than I have commonly witnessed, I am not without hope that they will at least improve a little. Several of my new pupils came to me from the county jail; and the clergyman, who is also a magistrate (at whose most earnest entreaty I set up this school), thinks that by instructing them more, he shall have occasion to *commit* them less.

Mrs. Hatsell was so good as to call on me yesterday; she gave me a good account of our dear friends at Fulham. She gave me also much pleasure, by telling me that the successful zeal of Lady Howard in the cause of the Repository had banished the vicious trash from six shops. This is doing the thing effectually; for though it is easy to furnish shops with our tracts, it requires great influence to expel the poison of the old sort. I am now hard at work in putting into practice the knowledge I have collected from near a year's experience, and am going to make a material alteration in the plan. I have tried to collect every objection, in order to obviate them;

the two following are the principal. On the one hand, the gentry, among whom I find they are full as much read as by common people, wish to have them in a better form, for their children, for schools, &c., and complain that they do not bind well: on the other hand, we were mistaken in believing them cheap enough for the hawkers. I find they have been used to get three hundred per cent. on their old trash; of course they will not sell ours, but declare they have no objection to goodness, if it were but profitable. Mr. T—— and two or three others have condescended to spend hours with the hawkers, to learn the mysteries of their trade; the result is, we purpose next month to begin to print two different editions of the same tract, one of a handsome appearance for the rich, the other on coarser paper, but so excessively cheap by wholesale as fully to meet the hawkers on their own ground. Be so kind to spread this information as wide as you can, *en attendant* that our papers come out to explain it. I am more anxious than ever for the extension of the plan, as I have had sent down to me half-penny papers, printed at the seditious shops, full of the most horrid blasphemy and profaneness. Vulgar and indecent penny books were always common, but speculative infidelity, brought down to the pockets and capacities of the poor, forms a new era in our history. This requires strong counteraction; I do not pretend that ours is very strong, but we must do what we can.

Our dear bishop dropped something, last year, of an idea of getting our little books given to the charity children of London. If such a scheme could be adopted (as has been done in Manchester to a great extent), it would perhaps cause the books to be known among the parents of these children, and we should get them introduced among a greater number of the lower class than we have yet been able to do.

Bath is fuller than I believe ever was known; you cannot stir without treading on the heels of a peer, and it is some comfort to think that, of the same murmuring people who pretend to grumble at the badness of the times, there were 1700 at T——'s ball last night. So you see things are not so bad as some gloomy folks think.

If you are still at Fulham, say every thing for me that conveys an idea of respect and affection; as well as to Lady Cremorne. Think of her being here, and my not seeing her!

The party of *moderates* is so small, that there was no such thing as issuing the enclosed ballad from the cheap repository. One copy is for the bishop, the other for your own eating. I have many other small things to say, but have no time to say them in. You may think it a small *thing*, though it is a great *truth*, that

I am your affectionate,

H. More.

From the same to the same.

Bath, Feb. 19.

DEAR SIR,

My sister Patty went to Bristol two days ago, when I desired she would beg Miss Mills to explain to you the cause of my seemingly very unkind, I had almost said brutal, behaviour to you, in never having taken the least notice of the many kind letters which your friendly zeal for me, and for the cause I have so much at heart, have prompted you to write. I hope and believe you clearly understand that nothing but my firm persuasion that you had sailed would have caused me to behave with such seeming negligence and ingratitude; for I have felt very sensibly your attentions; and I own I so rarely meet with persons who enter, with my own sort of keenness, into business of this sort, that I feel myself particularly drawn and attached to those who feel anxious and alive in the same sort of pursuits in which I myself am engaged.

Your accounts of your democratic visits at Portsmouth and its vicinity amused me not a little. I can truly and thankfully say, I hear with little emotion such attacks on the supposed violence of my aristocratic principles; you know how much more I have had to sustain from my supposed attachment to democrats and dissenters. My episcopal and other *great* friends suspect me of leaning too strongly to that side, while I am supported by the consciousness of the moderation of my principles, both in what relates to politics and religion. I have received a most flaming letter from America, abusing me on the same ground. May you and I, my dear sir, be tempted by neither abuse nor flattery to depart from that candour and that tolerating spirit which makes so necessary a part of the Christian character; and which I trust will stand us in stead, when all petty names of party and sect shall be done away, and charity shall be all in all! Oh that it could be so here!

I hardly know what I write, through haste. My sisters desire to be kindly remembered to you. Be assured of the best wishes, the kind regards, and the hearty prayers of

Dear sir,

Your obliged and faithful friend,

H. MORE.

From the Rev. J. Newton to Mrs. H. More.

Priestlands, September 8, 1796.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I am often at Cowslip Green in spirit, and traversing Mendip in all directions in quest of you and dear Miss Patty. And though I cannot be certain of the exact spot, I am with you

still; for what is local distance to kindred minds! However, at the foot of the ladder I am sure to meet with you. Do you sometimes think of an old man at No. 6? Do you not, in the multiplicity of your engagements, at least now and then offer a petition in his favour? Perhaps at that very moment I am praying for you and yours.

I think your case is almost as remarkable as my own, though in a different way. Indeed, madam, you are a miracle of mercy:—how much had you to break through! how much to give up! All things are equally easy to Almighty power; but, comparatively speaking, I think the conversion of a libertine much more hopeful than of those who, after having been applauded and caressed by the world, must give up their characters, and must be content to be thought fools by many who once looked up to them, before they can be truly wise. I cannot wonder that a sense of the love of Jesus to *you* should constrain you as it does to devote all your time, and talents, and influence to your service. Nor do I wonder at the success and encouragement he gives you in your department. I believe for this very cause he singled you out, and raised you up, to be eminently useful in your day; and that your example, if any thing can do it, might force conviction on the minds of infidels and gainsayers.

We, that is my dear Betsy and I, left London the 19th of August. We came hither on the 6th instant, and return to our head-quarters at Portswood Green to-morrow. They will not allow me a pulpit at Southampton; but my dear Mr. Taylor has fitted up a place for me in his house, which I suppose will hold near three hundred people. There I often preach to his poor neighbours, who seem ready to hear the gospel, but seldom have opportunity. If nothing unforeseen occurs (for who can tell what a day may bring forth), we shall stay till about the 29th, and then return to our beloved home, and friends, and people.

I am seventy-one years, one month, and four days old. The probability of being soon laid aside, if I should not be suddenly called away, made me desirous of an assistant, who might supply my place to the satisfaction of my hearers. Such a one I hoped for in Buchanan, but he is gone. I had no doubt but that it was the Lord's will, and therefore I gave him up without reluctance. I then procured Mr. Benamor, whom I have no doubt would have fully answered my wishes. But just as I was coming away, he was suddenly taken ill, which I thought would have prevented my excursion. He finished his course last Friday; so that I am now destitute again. But this is the Lord's will likewise. He enables me to acquiesce. "I know he does all things well." These were the last words Benamor spoke. He had considerable abilities as a preacher, and, what I regarded more, was eminent in grace beyond his years. He was upon the point of marriage with a very ami-

able lady; yet he said, "The Lord does all things well." We need not candles when the sun shines.

We unite in love, respects, and best wishes to you and to all the good ladies, with repeated acknowledgments of old kindnesses in the holyday week we spent at Cowslip Green.

May the great Shepherd bless all your sheep and lambs, and feed you that you may feed them! and while he makes you as a spring of water for the benefit of others, may your own soul be a watered garden, in which every plant of his grace may grow and flourish abundantly. Amen. You know that I love to hear from you, and you know that I do not expect it. I am aware of your more important engagements. But if a letter should come at any time, it will be very welcome.

I am, my dear madam,

Your very affectionate and obliged

JOHN NEWTON.

From Mrs. H. More to the Rev. J. Newton.

Cowslip Green, Sept. 15, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

If I had followed the impulse of my feelings, I should have sent you by return of post my warmest thanks for your kind, most undeservedly kind letter. If you had treated me as I deserve, you would never have written to me again; but I am truly gratified whenever I find any one to whom I am truly attached understanding me well enough not to make the punctuality of my correspondence a test of the sincerity of my friendship.

You cannot imagine, my dear sir, how much comfort I derive from being assured that I and mine are frequently remembered by you at the throne of grace. I cannot express to you how much I stand in need of every support. Weak health, weak spirits, and weak faith sometimes seem to concur in saying, "Ye take too much upon you;" and yet I seem to be carried through difficulties that appear insuperable, in a way that often fills me with wonder and gratitude. God is sometimes pleased to work by the most unpromising and unworthy instruments; I suppose to take away every shadow of doubt that it is his own doing. It always gives me the idea (if not too low and familiar) of a great author writing with a very bad pen. You will be glad to hear that our work rather increases. I think our various schools and societies consist of about sixteen or seventeen hundred. This would comparatively be little fatigue if they lay near together, but our ten parishes lie at considerable distances, so that poor Patty and I have a diameter of above twenty miles to travel in order to get at them. In some of these parishes we dare not do all we wish, by reason of the worldly clergymen, who are now quiet and civil, but who would become hostile if we attempted

in *their* parishes what we do in some others. In some of the most profligate places we have had the most success; and where we chiefly fail, it is with your *pretty good kind of people*, who do not see how they can be better. I think it has pleased God to give us the most rapid progress in the parish we last took up, not above a year ago. This place has helped to people the county jail and Botany Bay beyond any I know of. They seemed to have reached a sort of crisis of iniquity. Of near two hundred children, many of them grown up, hardly any had ever seen the inside of a church since they were christened. I cannot tell you the avidity with which the Scriptures were received by numbers of these poor creatures. Finding the heads of the parish (farmers) quite as ignorant as their labourers, we devised a method, at the outset, of saving their pride, by setting apart one evening in the week on purpose for their instruction. Above twenty of them, including their wives, attend, and many seem to be brought under serious impressions.

One great benefit which I have found to result from our projects is the removal of that great gulf which has divided the rich and poor in these country parishes, by making them meet together; whereas, before, they hardly thought they were children of one common father. Oh! how glad should I be to get you to preach to a little colony of colliers we have raised up. We have placed a young collier of uncommon gifts at the head, and, as I am willing to hope, of graces also; but as we have been sometimes disappointed after very promising beginnings, I have learned to rejoice with trembling. Unfortunately, the road to this place is so extremely bad that a carriage cannot get to it, so that we are not able to go half as often as we could wish and ought; and when we do, it is through more fatigue than we can well bear, though Patty is far more heroic than I am.

I wish you could recommend us any fresh sermons, calculated for our sort of audience; they should be very awakening as to the matter, but simple and perspicuous as to the expression. Most even of the spirited and striking ones I meet with have still this fault,—they presuppose too much knowledge and education in the readers or hearers; now we want some which teach and refer to first principles, and which suppose the audience to know nothing. The books, I think, to which we return the oftenest, are those of Rowland, Alleine, and Walker of Truro; but even of these we are obliged to lower the style as we read, and substitute familiar words for hard ones. I do not flatter myself that we do much good; but the folly, the prejudice, the ignorance, the opposition, and the various disappointments we sometimes meet with, serve at least to teach one a spirit of forbearance; and when we are coming home very tired at night, I often tell Patty that we

ought to take comfort in thinking, that if we have done the people no good, we have, I trust, got some good ourselves by such wholesome exercises of our patience and toleration. I sometimes tremble to think, that while busy in looking after the vineyards of others, "mine own vineyard have I not kept." Pray for me, my dear sir, that I may have a more lively faith, a deeper humility, a spirit of more complete self-renunciation; that I may be more dead to the world and more alive unto God.

I rejoice in the good and agreeable accounts you give of yourself, and hope your valuable health and life will be spared many years, and that your useful services in the church may be prolonged and extended. Pray remember me to Miss Catlett. I sympathize with you in the loss of your dear assistant. All this family join in affectionate remembrances to you, with, dear sir,

Your very faithful
and obliged friend,
H. More.

Pray tell Mr. Etty's Hermitage I am very much obliged to it for exciting that association of ideas in your mind which procured me the great gratification of your letter. These local combinations appear to me to be among the many mysteries of our being.

From the same to the same.

Cowslip Green, Nov. 10, 1796.

My dear Sir,

I have been so very shabby in my health ever since I received your last kind letter, I am afraid I ought to say letters, that I have not written a line but upon absolute business. This, however, is not an appropriate apology for not having thanked you for the packet of excellent tracts you had the goodness to send me. My pain has been so much in my head that I have not thoroughly looked them over, but have no doubt, from the judgment of the selector, and from the specimen I had last Sunday, when Patty read one of the sermons (an excellent one) to our little evening audience in one of the villages, that they are extremely well calculated to answer the end,—being at once awakening and intelligible.

You will think I take more interest in the things of this world than in those of the next, if I honestly confess that Mr. Cowper's letters did not wait so long, nor lie so quietly unopened as the sermons. They are extremely interesting, not only as they show a bright and shining intellect, but as they let one more intimately into the mind of a man whose writings I have always greatly admired. But, alas! how dim is the brightness of human glory. My heart aches to see this fine

spirit clouded by doubt, depression, and despair. This fresh instance, added to several others I have observed, in which the finest abilities bring no comfort to the possessors, makes me think that genius is only a lamp at your door, very conducive to the public good, but which neither lights nor cheers the inhabitant of the house.

My sisters desire to be affectionately remembered to you and Miss Catlett. One or two of them talk of decamping soon to their warmer mansion at Bath, not much delighting in rural felicity and the solitude of our quiet valley in the gloomy month of November. For me, however, the country, stripped of its foliage as it is, in naked majesty, has still many charms; and I shall not think of deserting it till I am absolutely starved out. I am still able to keep the field every fine day; it does good to my health and spirits; I have the comfort, too, of seeing how my little projects go on—and I have asses' milk to drink, and a horse to ride; advantages I could never have at Bath without a great expense. When I do get thither, if I can leave my cough behind me, I know the waters will be very good for my head; so you see, go where I will, there are many blessings and comforts to be found, and perhaps the greatest blessing of all may be that very want of health which makes the other seem necessary or pleasant.

When you see our excellent friend Mrs. Gardiner, pray remember me to her most kindly, and when you write, do me the favour to mention how she does.

I have many things to say, but have used up my paper, and yet said nothing I intended. Adieu, my dear sir, and when you offer your supplications at the throne of grace for those who most need light, strength, and direction, you will not, I trust, forget

Your faithful and sincere friend,

H. More.

To Mrs. Martha More.

Fulham Palace, 1796.

While you are labouring in your Sunday missions, I am idling my time with lords and commoners. Pitt and Wilberforce went together to Cambridge, whence the latter was to go on to Yorkshire. He declared his resolution not only to spend no money, but not even to canvass, on account of his weak state of health. I trust there will be no occasion. Our chief amusement here has been singing our new Repository Election Song. Ormerod set it to music, and it was performed one day for the amusement of two bishops; the performers were all grave divines at Lord Cremorne's.

Lady Waldegrave asked me to go and stay a night with her in town, but as I had a cold, I got her to come here instead, and we had a four hours *tête-à-tête* yesterday morning. Did I

ever tell you of the satisfaction Pitt expressed one day about our tracts? He said he had just heard that forty thousand had been sent to America, and he had not met with any thing a long time that had pleased him more than that such sort of reading was gaining ground in that country.

The two following letters may be properly introduced here, notwithstanding the interval between their dates, on account of other circumstances which connect them together.

From Mrs. H. More to the late Duchess of Gloucester.

Cowslip Green, Aug. 24, 1795.

MADAM,

I feel too sensibly the privilege of being permitted to have some occasional intercourse with your royal highness, not to avail myself sometimes of the permission. You appear to me to enter so sincerely into those important points which involve the highest interests of mankind, and to be so earnest in your investigation of religious truths, that I venture, without apology, to put into your hands the little essay which accompanies this letter. You will find the principles it inculcates strict, but I think the strictness is not carried further than the gospel rule imposes and enjoins; and it appears to me to be highly important, especially for young persons of very high rank, to be enabled and assisted properly to appreciate the real standard of moral truth which Christianity has established; and that inferior, but more accommodating, and therefore more acceptable, standard, which the world holds out to its votaries. In short, it appears to me to be an object of no small importance to get such a sound and fixed principle as shall remove that self-delusion which the world and all its pleasing blandishments are so calculated to excite in young and amiable hearts. However one may, for a time, be seduced by the manner and practices of gay society, it seems to me of the last importance to preserve the *principle* pure, and to keep the standard high. I would therefore be particularly sedulous in inspiring young persons with a right view and a sound judgment in religious matters, even though I was sure they would be drawn into perpetual errors by their mixing with the world; because I never think any faults irreclaimable, or any dangers hopeless, while there is no perversion of principle, and no warp in the judgment. But when they cease to see things as they really are, to confound distinctions, to pervert principles, to call good evil, and evil good; then I always feel that the corruption has spread very far, and has not only seduced the passions, but darkened the intellect also.

It may be some recommendation of the essay I send, to say that it was written by a grave divine, but by one who lives in

the world, and has from youth and fortune all its pleasures at command, though his piety leads him to a very abstinent use of them.

I hope White sent your royal highness "*The Riot*," and "*Hints to All Ranks on the Present Scarcity*," as they were written with a particular reference to these alarming times. On the 1st of September I shall bring out a piece which I hope will be useful; it is called "*The Way to Plenty*;" its object is to convince the common people that their extreme poverty is caused still more by their own total want of economy than by the badness of the times. I have even descended to the minute details of management, in the hope of being serviceable to the mass of the people, though at the hazard of being reprobated by my more polished and enlightened friends.

I have the honour to be, madam,

Your royal highness's most obliged,

Most obedient humble servant,

H. More.

From the same to the same.

Cowslip Green, Sept. 29, 1797.

Madam,

I should not have been so tardy in expressing my acknowledgments for the very kind letter which I had the honour of receiving from your royal highness, but that it found me on a sick-bed, to which I have lately been pretty much confined. But as I am persuaded that sickness comes from the same wise and merciful Hand which also dispenses health, I wish to be enabled to receive both with an equal temper of mind, convinced as I am that that which is bestowed on me is precisely that which is best for me.

I should not, madam, have been so presuming as to set out with talking of my insignificant self, in preference to the very interesting subjects of your royal highness's letter, did I not feel it my duty to account for my seeming inattention. In a general way, I verily believe that the multiplied instances of that crime, against which it is a great happiness to see Lord Kenyon so solemnly set his face, are in no small degree owing to the greedy and depraved appetite for novels,—that shameful fashion which our writers of this class have adopted from the French, of choosing married persons for the hero or heroine, adorning them with all the graces and accomplishments which can fascinate the fancy, bringing them into the most dangerous situations, embellished with the most pernicious descriptions, and making them commit the grossest crimes under the mask of sentiment, and with the apology of irresistible passion, or unsuitable alliance, or some other equally false and corrupt motive; this, I doubt not, has been one grand and leading

cause of the corruption of principle which has lately so peculiarly disgraced our courts of justice, and made it almost dangerous for a lady of delicacy to look over a newspaper, for fear of having her eyes offended with one of those disgusting trials. If your royal highness happens to have "Cowper's Poems" at hand, I would beg leave to refer to the ninety-fourth page of the second volume, where you will see his pious indignation on this subject beautifully expressed, with genuine good sense and truth.

The Bishop of London was so good as to show me his improved Life of Archbishop Secker, in manuscript, when I was at Fulham. I warmly encouraged the publication, as containing a just refutation of Bishop Hurd's reflection on Secker; but chiefly for the reason your royal highness assigns, as a very important one, namely, that it will probably set many people to read the archbishop's works who had either neglected or forgotten them. I have a great reverence for his talents and his virtues, and he appears to me to have possessed one faculty of high and singular importance for a writer on religion and morals,—I mean an acute intuitive knowledge of the human heart. I think one grand defect in many of our preachers, and one reason, though not the primary one, why they do so little good, is, that they do not attentively and accurately study human nature. One very distinguishing attribute of the great and Divine Preacher was, as the apostle remarks, that he knew what was in man. I cannot dismiss this subject without taking the liberty your royal highness is so gracious as to allow me, by expatiating a little on your remark that "his sermons will do great good, because he is not too hard on the common run of good sort of people." I presume your royal highness does not mean that they will do *more* good because of that. That it will cause them to be *more read*, I readily grant; but that it will cause them to do *more good*, I take the liberty to question. I have had the honour and the impertinence more than once to hold some very lively and agreeable debates with your royal highness on this same *standard of right*, and on the difference (great and essential in the view of Scripture) between *good sort of people and good people*. You, madam, however, have always conceded to me that there is no real goodness where there is no religion, and that there is no true religion but that religion which the gospel exhibits. I do not mean that any human being (with all those frailties and imperfections which still impede the best) can act up to the perfect pattern there exhibited. Even the best of the apostles, the saints, and martyrs fall short of it. But I must contend that every real Christian will endeavour to act on the *principle*, and in the *spirit*, of the religion of Christ. He must labour after genuine piety and goodness, not for the praise of men, but for the glory of God. He must keep before his eyes, and labour after a degree of

perfection, which, however, he knows he shall never be able to attain. A continual sense of his many failings will serve to maintain him in humility,—the basis of all true religion. Such a one, I doubt not, who does all he *can*, and renounces all merit in what he *does*, will most certainly be graciously accepted, in spite of the many weaknesses, imperfections, and even sins with which his best endeavours will be defiled. He knows that he himself is weak, but that his Redeemer is strong.

If I did not think it was pushing the subject too far for a letter, I would go on to remark that many persons in the New Testament, of whose future state we cannot entertain a very sanguine opinion, appear in a worldly sense to have been rather "good sort of people." The man at whose gate the beggar Lazarus lay may be supposed to have been charitable as well as splendid. He who said, "Soul, take thy ease," and pulled down his barns to build greater, is not said to have acquired his vast affluence unjustly; and the Pharisee who thanked God that he was not as other men are, would probably have been reckoned in the number of amiable and *good sort of people* in St. James's-square; and some of the most respectable in the fashionable world would have been very glad to have gone to his dinners or his parties. The young ruler *was a very good sort of man indeed;* but he seems to have loved the world better than his Saviour; and we are left to indulge no very assured hope of his eternal happiness.

It is a proof that I entertain a high opinion of your royal highness's piety as well as condescension, when I venture to talk so seriously and so largely on subjects which are generally (I know not for what reason) thought too solemn for letters. If, madam, you should, however, have the goodness at your leisure to tell me I have not presumed too far, it will be a great gratification to me.

It is with very serious satisfaction I reflect on the happy disposition of ——. I have been delighted to see her enter with zeal, earnestness, and ability into topics which would not be interesting to one of her age and rank, had she not cultivated sound principles with sound sense, and with a seriousness and discernment which fill my mind with the most flattering hopes that, through the Divine grace, she may *go on unto perfection.* I always use that word in a very qualified sense, even of the best human beings, while they continue on earth.

I rejoice to see that your royal highness has so strong an idea of the power of intercessory prayer. I meet with some people who, though they allow great weight to prayer in one's own case, do not feel its importance in the case of others. The Bible abounds with instances to the contrary of their opinion; as in the case of Abraham, Moses, Elijah: in short, it is clearly a Scriptural injunction. I am under great concern

for the death of Mr. Elliott. I knew few young men at once so amiable, so elegant, so pious—he was a real Christian!

To apologise for the length of this letter would only be to make it longer. I throw myself on your clemency to forgive it, and remain, with every sentiment of gratitude and respect,

Your royal highness's very obliged
and most obedient humble servant,
H. More.

END OF VOLUME I.